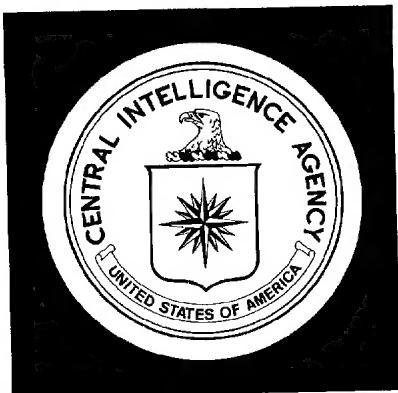


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Research Study

Soviet Policy and European Communism

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October 1976

SOVIET POLICY AND EUROPEAN
COMMUNISM

by
Gene Wicklund

The author is grateful for the many comments and suggestions which were received from other CIA offices during the preparation of this study. Comments and questions will be welcomed by the author on Red 1650.

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FOREWORD

This study treats relations between the Soviets and the most important Western European Communist Parties, those of France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain. It reviews the extent to which the objectives of these Parties correspond to the immediate and more distant goals of Soviet policy, and examines the limitations on Moscow's ability to control the actions of these Parties. It also focuses on the political and doctrinal problems which the rise of a self-consciously independent Western European wing of the Communist movement has caused for Moscow, and is likely to cause in the future.

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PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

- The ideological, organizational, and financial pressures which the Soviets can bring to bear on the major Western Parties may suffice to hold these Parties in line on issues of marginal importance to them, but Moscow is unable to control the actions of even the most "loyal" of these Parties when issues which directly touch their most vital interests are at stake.
- The principal objective of the Western Communists—the acquisition of political power—does not fully mesh with Moscow's near-term interest in developing a stable pattern of economic and political cooperation with the West, nor with the low-risk approach to foreign political questions generally favored by the present Soviet leaders.
- Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that the Soviets believe that their longer-term interest in the reduction of US influence in Europe and in the political neutralization of Western Europe will be served by the accession to power of local Communist Parties.
- This conviction is supported by their judgment that their doctrinal and political problems with the Western Communists, although annoying and worrisome, are manageable and susceptible to improvement.
- Moscow's judgment in this regard is not necessarily correct. In the longer term—that is, beyond the next year or two—the proximity to power of the major Western Parties is likely to accentuate their tendency to give priority to considerations of political expediency, thus heightening tensions in their relations with Moscow.

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DISCUSSION

I. INTRODUCTION

Europe is the heaviest weight in the East-West balance of power, and it is there that any changes in the dividing lines between East and West will have the most serious implications. These lines have been drawn not only on the basis of geopolitical divisions, but also on the basis of adherence to conflicting ideologies. It is this latter fact which lends such significance to the recent rise in the influence and prospects of the Communist Parties of southern Europe.

The Italian Communist Party (PCI) has advanced furthest. Its electoral successes, most recently in the legislative elections of June 1976, have brought it to the verge of the "historic compromise" with the Christian Democrats (DC) which it has sought since 1973 as a means of winning a formal role in government. The achievements of the French Communist Party (PCF) are less impressive, but in May 1974 it fell only inches short of its goal of putting the candidate of the Union of the Left, Socialist Francois Mitterrand, into the Elysee Palace as the President of the French Republic. Its efforts are now centered on the legislative elections scheduled for 1978, where it hopes—again in conjunction with its Socialist electoral ally—to win a majority.

On the southwestern periphery of Europe, the Portuguese and Spanish Parties have emerged after decades of obscurity to play an important role in the affairs of their countries. The Portuguese coup of April 1974 catapulted the hitherto insignificant Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) to prominence, initially as the chief political ally of the ruling clique of military officers. Even after the series of defeats it has absorbed since mid-1975, the PCP retains considerable organizational strength and a capacity to frustrate the programs of the government in Lisbon. The Spanish Communist Party (PCE), while as yet still illegal and less successful than its brother Parties, is the strongest

voice in the incipient Spanish labor movement and has made much progress in breaking out of the political ghetto in which it had languished under Franco.

If the European Communist movement were still the near-monolith it was during much of the postwar period, there could be no doubt that these developments would redound directly to the benefit of the Soviet Union. However, the relationship is no longer so simple. The rising tide of Communist influence in Western Europe has been accompanied by an equally visible erosion of the unity of the Communist movement and a diminution of Soviet authority over it.

These parallel trends have made it much more difficult to assess the implications of the rise of Communist influence in southern Europe for the balance of power between East and West. In order to make any general assessment, some specific questions must be answered.

- Do the Soviets possess the means to compel or induce the Western Communists to act in accordance with Moscow's wishes?
- To what extent do the objectives of the Western Communists mesh with Soviet policy objectives, both over the short-term and over the long-term?
- How significant are the doctrinal and political problems which the rising influence of Western European Communist Parties pose for the Soviets?

While certain general observations can be made about the state of Moscow's relations with West European Communism, Soviet relations with each of the four Parties with which this paper is concerned cannot be fitted into one mold. The Parties themselves range in character from the neo-Stalinist PCP to the broad-based and "revisionist" Italian Party, and the

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historical and political foundations of their relationships with the CPSU are equally diverse. Answers to the general questions posed above can be provided only on the basis of an examination of the specific features of Soviet relations with each of these Parties.

II. GENERAL TRENDS IN EUROPEAN COMMUNISM

A. Historical Background to Communist Discord

The decline in the solidarity of the international Communist movement and in Soviet authority over it is dramatic when viewed in historical perspective. Soviet control of the international movement at its origin was well-nigh absolute. The Comintern, or Third International, which provided the organizational skeleton of the international movement from its foundation in 1919 to its dissolution in 1943, was entirely a Soviet creation. Its headquarters were in Moscow, the bulk of its leadership and staff was Soviet, and the principal condition for membership in the organization was an unqualified acceptance of Lenin's famous Twenty-One Principles. This was a list of organizational and ideological rules designed to ensure that foreign Parties were cast in the image of the victorious Russian Bolsheviks.

And, in fact, foreign Parties were in large part mere carbon copies of the Russian Party. Such tendencies to independent thought and action as existed were largely obliterated under the twin pressures of domestic repression—which deepened the dependence of many of the foreign Parties dependent on Soviet support for their very survival—and Stalinist purges, which struck some foreign Parties almost as severely as they did the Soviet Party.

The abolition of the Comintern in 1943 was a gesture to Moscow's wartime allies, and had no effect on the reality of Moscow's dominance over the foreign Parties. This continued to be virtually unshaken, as was demonstrated by Moscow's ability in 1944-1945 to compel the large Italian and French Parties to subordinate their own political ambitions to the needs of Soviet foreign policy. Under Soviet instructions, the French and Italians dismantled the large armed resistance movements which they controlled and joined in conservative-dominated governments of national unity in order to enable Moscow to maintain

in good order the Grand Alliance with Washington and London.

Moscow's control was more visibly demonstrated in 1947, at the foundation of the Cominform. This truncated successor of the Comintern formally joined the French and Italian Parties with the Soviet Party and the Eastern European clients of the Soviet Union, and was established in large part for the purpose of compelling the French and Italian Communists to subordinate their own immediate political interests to an all-out struggle against the Marshall Plan. It was again a mark of Soviet authority that the French and Italian Parties obediently fell into line, thereby cutting themselves off from participation in government and consigning themselves to political isolation and futility.

This was the high-water mark of Soviet authority, however. Within a year the monolithic solidarity of the Communist world had been broken, as Titoist Yugoslavia openly defied Moscow and asserted its right to define its own national policies. This first serious setback to Soviet authority within the Communist movement, which did not occur until almost three decades after the foundation of the Comintern, has been followed by many others.

The post-Stalin Soviet leadership under Nikita Khrushchev was itself instrumental in contributing to the growth of fissures within the movement. Khrushchev's efforts to discredit the foreign and domestic policies of his predecessor at the Soviet 20th Party Congress in 1956 encouraged many foreign Communists to believe that now they would have greater freedom to chart their own course. Among them was Palmiro Togliatti, the leader of the PCI and a former Comintern agent, who shortly after the 20th Congress proclaimed the doctrine of "polycentrism," which held that each national Party should be free to develop its own road to Communism rather than obeying the dictates of a single center—Moscow.

B. Challenges to Soviet Leadership

Moscow has never succeeded in closing the Pandora's box opened at the 20th Congress. In the ensuing two decades, it has had to cope with a series of challenges to its leadership launched by both Eastern and Western Communists. Each successive threat to the Soviet position has contributed to the overall process of political and ideological erosion,

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whatever the degree of Moscow's success in dealing with them.

Moscow's bloody suppression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956, although it checked the nationalist threat to the USSR's Eastern European empire, cost the Communist movement the support of many of its most prominent adherents and led many foreign Communists to question the moral basis of Soviet authority. Moscow's success in isolating the Chinese Communists from the mainstream of the Communist movement after the open eruption of the Sino-Soviet dispute in 1959 has not completely erased the divisive effects of that quarrel. Quite apart from the relatively small number of adherents the Chinese have been able to win for the doctrines of Maoism, the major non-Bloc Parties have been unwilling to go along with Soviet efforts to formally excommunicate the Chinese. Consequently, the Chinese problem remains as an ulcer on the body of the Communist movement.

Similarly, the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 had the effect of shoring up the position of Soviet style ideological orthodoxy in Eastern Europe, but only at the cost of adding greatly to the strains on Moscow's relations with the major nonruling Parties.

C. International Conferences Mark Decline in Soviet Authority

The successively less impressive results of the international Communist conferences which have taken place since the 20th Party Congress also mark the decline in Moscow's authority over the Communist movement. The conference of 81 Parties held in Moscow in 1960 produced a document which was a carefully-worded compromise between the positions of the Soviets and the Chinese. It is more memorable as the last such meeting attended by the Chinese and as the scene of a violent debate between the Soviet hosts and their Chinese guests. The next—and last—World Communist Conference met in 1969, five years behind schedule. It was boycotted by the most important Asian Parties, and produced a final document which many European Parties, including the Italians and Spanish, refused to endorse in full.

Finally, the recent Conference of European Communist Parties (CECP), which met in June 1976, produced a document which was signed by no one, and, hence, binding on no one. It also failed to specifically invoke "proletarian internationalism" or

to excoriate "anti-Sovietism," thereby falling short of the standards established by previous conferences. These two phrases have been used as codewords to denote the obligation of all Communists to put the promotion of Soviet interests before other concerns. It was another mark of the movement's decline that several Western European Communist leaders publicly stated their expectation that the meeting would be the last of its kind.

D. Sources of Communist Disunity

The sources of the disunity which have come to plague the Communist movement are manifold, but at bottom they all stem from the fading of the movement's international ideals. The Communist movement, from its origins as an international faith, has moved steadily in the direction of becoming a mere congeries of national Parties moved by parochial considerations of political advantage.

The Soviets themselves have given the lead to this trend. They long ago transformed the doctrine of "socialist internationalism" from "one for all" to "all for one"—the one being the USSR and the all including all the other members of the international movement. The moral authority which accrued to the USSR as the homeland of Communism and the dependence of foreign Communists on it for financial and organizational support combined to win the allegiance of foreign Communists to this tenet. The powerful German Party's suicidal refusal to join forces with the Socialists against the Nazi menace in the 1930s and the damaging tactical shifts imposed on the French and Italian Communists in the immediate postwar years were alike responses to the needs of Soviet policy rather than to the dictates of political reality in the countries involved.

The notion that the preservation and strengthening of the Soviet state took precedence over all other concerns could be maintained without difficulty only as long as the Soviet Union remained alone as the world's only Communist state. It has become steadily more difficult to sustain as the Communist Bloc has expanded to include many other states. The obvious clashes of interest which have troubled relations between these states, particularly the periodic convulsions which have shaken Eastern Europe and the Sino-Soviet feud, have further contributed to an erosion of Moscow's moral authority within the movement. It has become more and more difficult for the Soviets to

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justify their actions in terms of the common interests of all Communists, not least because their positions have come under the direct attack of other Communists, most consistently by the Chinese.

At the same time that the prestige of the Soviets within the international movement has been in decline, the prospects of some of the Western European Parties have been in the ascendant. The convergence of these two trend lines has contributed to the uncertainty within the European Communist movement. With the vision of power glimmering before their eyes, some of these Parties—most significantly, the French and Italian Parties, which together dominate Western European Communism—have shown an increasing willingness to put their own interests on a par with those of the Soviet Union, or even ahead of them. In fact, they have begun to show some of the same tendencies to think in basically national terms as have those Parties which already exercise power. The improvement in the domestic power base of the larger Western Parties has also made them better able to resist direct Soviet pressure.

E. Autonomy the Central Issue

The issues which divide the Soviets and these Parties are often expressed in terms of ideological conflict, and described as a struggle between the proponents of "orthodoxy" and the supporters of "revisionism." In fact, the issues in dispute between the Soviets and the dissident Parties of the West vary from case to case. On one issue, however, the dissident Parties are united, and it is on this issue that they have joined most effectively to resist the Soviets.

This is the issue of autonomy, or, as seen from the Soviet perspective, discipline. The dissident Western Parties—the Italian, Spanish and now the French—insist with increasing vehemence on their right to define their own interests and pursue them with tactics of their own devising. The Soviets, for their part, continue to insist that the interests of any single Party must be subordinated to the common interests of the international movement, and assert the right as the senior member of that movement to have the major voice in defining what these common interests are.

This issue has been a bone of contention between the Soviets and the dissident Parties, regardless of the degree to which the Soviets may have agreed or

disagreed with the tactical line followed by any one of these Parties, or have questioned its adherence to the traditional Marxist-Leninist goal of class (one-party) dictatorship.

In fact, the Soviets have soft-pedaled their suspicions as to the ultimate loyalties of the Western Parties. Moreover, despite occasional disagreements on specific issues of political tactics, the Soviets have no quarrel with the general features of the tactical line followed by the Western Parties.

Apart from local differences, this line features a common disavowal of revolutionary political and social goals in favor of a moderate and "democratic" program, and an emphasis on the "national" character of the Party. This stance is intended to serve as the basis for the establishment of electoral alliances with Socialists and other non-Communist political elements which are capable together of forming a majority. It is a strategy of the long-haul, with the emphasis on caution and patience rather than the violent or sudden seizure of power.

Despite its points of dissimilarity with the path followed by the Russian Communists in their seizure of power, the Soviets have lent their strong support to the general features of this line. The CPSU acknowledged the possibility of a peaceful path to Communism after the 20th Congress in 1956. Moscow's support for the notion of forming electoral alliances with Socialists and Social-Democrats was enunciated at Karlovy Vary in 1967, and was reaffirmed even after the occupation of Czechoslovakia.* This endorsement was reaffirmed most recently at the 25th Congress of the CPSU in February 1976, in General Secretary Brezhnev's report to the Congress, where he cited as an example for others the CPSU's determination to improve its relations with "progressive" parties.

The Soviets have also been willing to accommodate themselves to some—but not all—of the Western Parties' efforts to convince their electorates of their national character and freedom from international commitments. Moscow's tolerance of the tactical maneuvers of the Western Parties has been most evident in its tacit approval of the line the French, Italian, and Portuguese Parties have taken toward

* The Soviet Politburo's senior ideologue, M. A. Suslov, criticized Communism's historical antipathy to collaboration with Social Democracy as "unfounded" in March 1969.

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membership in NATO. All have disclaimed any intention of initiating a unilateral withdrawal from the alliance if they should come to power. Moscow's acceptance of this position has been indicated by its willingness to publish accurate descriptions of the positions the Parties have taken.* Not surprisingly, Moscow has shown less understanding for the circumstances which have led some of the Western Communists—particularly the Spanish and French—to demonstrate their independence by attacks on Soviet internal policy.

There are other broad limits to the support Moscow is willing to extend to the maneuvers of the Western Parties. One is Moscow's insistence that political compromise must be accomplished without ideological compromise. It is the essence of the Soviet position that Communists must demonstrate political flexibility in order to put themselves into a position to seduce their allies, but must guard against the danger that they will themselves be seduced by the doctrines espoused by their political rivals.**

Despite these reservations, Moscow's fundamental support for the moderate line of the Western Parties is unquestionable. Moscow's position stems from its understanding of the requirements of the Western European political environment and from the needs of Soviet foreign policy. If a judgment is to be reached on the basis of the history of Soviet relations with the Western Communists, the latter consideration is the more important. Moscow's efforts to reduce tensions with the West and to build a structure of political and economic cooperation with the major Western countries depend on a lessening of internal as well as external tensions; hence, Moscow's present aversion to aggressive action on the part of the European Parties.

It is the dissident Parties' conviction of Moscow's readiness to subordinate the needs of the international movement—or rather, of foreign Communists—to the needs of Soviet foreign policy which makes them so determined to oppose Moscow's efforts to assert its leadership of the movement. Memories of Moscow's

past willingness to sacrifice the French and Italian Parties' interests to Stalin's political and territorial objectives in Europe have been kept alive by more recent demonstrations of Soviet egocentrism. These include Moscow's willingness to develop its relations with the Spanish regime over the protests of the proscribed PCE and its similar efforts to cultivate its relations with the French government at the expense of the electoral prospects of the French Communists. (These incidents will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of the paper.)

F. The Present Balance

The results of the CECP which met in East Berlin on 29-30 June 1976 were indicative of the inability of the Soviets to reassert their authority over the European Communist movement. Moscow's failure was all the more striking in that the Conference had originally been conceived of—in 1974—as a vehicle which would enable the Soviets to achieve such a reassertion.

While the trend toward disintegration within the European Communist movement is clear, it is much less clear what stage the process has reached. The mere fact that all the major European Parties, including those most outspoken in their assertion of independence, chose to attend the European Conference is proof that the ties which link the Communist Parties are still in existence, even though weakened.

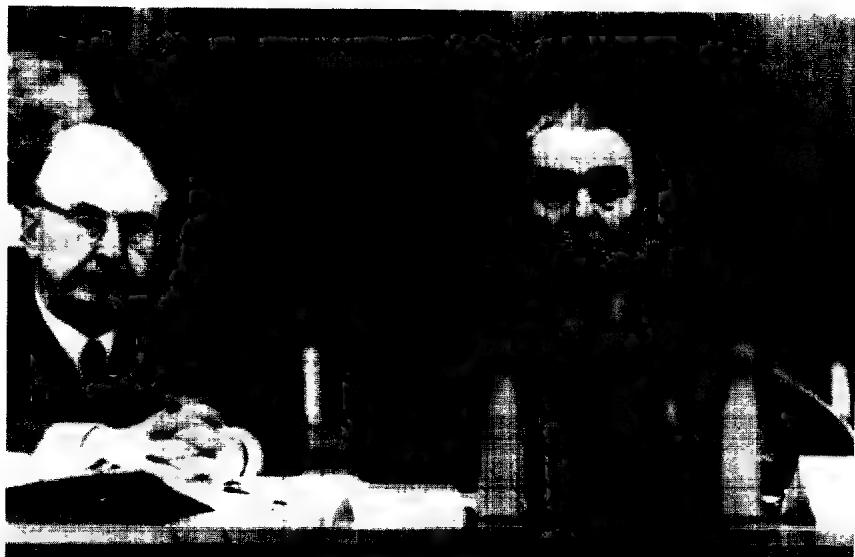
The dissident Parties cannot turn their backs on the international movement without threatening the unity of their own ranks. This is a principal source of such leverage over the Western Communists as the Soviet Union retains. The Soviets, on the other hand, need their link with the European wing of the Communist movement to confirm the legitimacy of their own system and their policies. This is both psychologically important and essential to the internal standing of the Soviet leaders.

The main achievement of the European Conference was to endorse Moscow's pursuit of detente with the governments of the West as compatible with the interests of Western Communism. This the document did in fulsome detail. It went beyond this to register a broad consensus of support for the main outlines of Soviet foreign policy, including Soviet disarmament proposals and the essentials of the Soviet position on European security, the Middle East, and southern

* For example, see the interview with PCP leader Cunhal which appeared in *Pravda* on 12 June 1976, and *Pravda* on the Italian election campaign on 15 May 1976.

** At the 25th Congress, Brezhnev coupled his support for cooperation between Communists and non-Communists to a reminder that there could be "no question of an ideological rapprochement."

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The two faces of the Conference of European Communist Parties. In the top photo, a frowning L. I. Brezhnev and B. N. Ponomarev (the Soviet Party official responsible for relations with nonruling Communist Parties) listen to the speeches of delegates to the Congress. In the bottom photo, Brezhnev and Ponomarev are all smiles as they meet publicly with Enrico Berlinguer, the independently-minded leader of the Italian Communists. (Berlinguer is at the far left.)

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Africa. It is this broad coincidence of views that permits the Soviets to retain their conviction that the maintenance of their relationship with the Communist Parties of the West is on balance in their interests, however annoying and troublesome may be some of the actions of some of these Parties.

While these general observations apply to Soviet relations with all of the dissident Parties, each of these Parties responds more to the unique circumstances which it faces than to any general rules of behavior. From the Soviet perspective, there is no single or simple solution to the problem of dealing with these Parties.

At the same time, the Soviet leaders' efforts to function as the leaders of the international Communist movement are complicated by the need to fulfill their primary function as national leaders. The immediate interests of the Soviet state do not often coincide with the demands of the international movement.

III. PORTUGAL

A. National and Ideological Impulses Conflict

The difficulties which the Soviet leaders face in reconciling their role as national leaders with claims to leadership of the international Communist movement have been evident in the Soviet response to developments in Portugal since the coup of 25 April 1974. They have had to balance their diplomatic stake in a relaxation of East-West tensions in Europe against their ideological commitment to fostering radical social and political change in the non-Communist world. Their actions have demonstrated the degree to which ideological commitments have been diluted by diplomatic necessity, and, conversely, the limits imposed on Soviet freedom of action by ideological conviction and domestic political needs.

B. Involvement in Portugal Contrary to Short-Term Soviet Interests

If the leaders of the Soviet Union were moved solely by considerations of immediate diplomatic advantage, involvement in the internal crisis which has gripped Portugal since the overthrow of the rightist Caetano regime in 1974 would have had little allure for them. Portugal has little to offer in the way of

military, economic, or political advantage to the USSR. Conversely, Soviet involvement in the affairs of a state which was both a member of the Atlantic Alliance and historically, culturally, and economically a member of the Western World threatened to place an intolerable strain on Moscow's relations with the West. There is in fact considerable evidence that the Soviet leaders shared this conclusion.

Moscow's lack of economic interest in Portugal has been amply demonstrated over the past two years. The existence of the Communist-influenced and generally pro-Soviet military government which ruled from September 1974 to September 1975 had no appreciable effect on the levels of Soviet trade with Portugal. Even after the conclusion of several highly ballyhooed trade agreements, Soviet exports to and imports from Portugal in September 1975 amounted to no more than 1.4 percent and 0.8 percent of the Portuguese totals.¹ The fact is that the Portuguese economy, with its heavy dependence on agriculture, has very little to offer the Soviets.

Neither have the Soviets displayed any interest in establishing a military presence in Portugal. In spite of the rumors which circulated in 1975 of such an interest in acquiring naval basing rights in the Azores, there is no evidence of any concrete Soviet approaches to the Portuguese. Although it cannot be excluded that Soviet naval planners had some interest in Portuguese port facilities, it cannot have been very great, given the priority assigned to the promotion of Soviet interests in the Eastern Mediterranean.

At any rate, it cannot have been great enough to justify the risk of a strong Western reaction which might have threatened the whole structure of East-West relations. There is ample evidence that the Soviets took this possibility seriously. They were at pains during the height of the Portuguese internal crisis in 1975 to persuade Western officials that they were not responsible for the actions of the PCP—which had attempted to use its influence on the ruling military clique to purge its political opponents from government and the media—and that they had no intention of intervening in Portuguese affairs. The fact that the Portuguese crisis and Western warnings against Soviet intervention both peaked just as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was about to convene in Helsinki undoubtedly sensitized the Soviet leaders to the danger that a

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Western reaction against Portuguese developments could result in a setback for their European policy.

Beyond the prospect of immediate diplomatic setbacks, other, more fundamental, considerations of *Realpolitik* argued against an open Soviet involvement in Portugal. Geographic location was not least among them. Portugal was far distant from the bases of Soviet power, and close to those of the West.

A judicious assessment of the local balance of power apparently led the Soviets to conclude that a Communist government could not be maintained in the face of Western opposition. According to a clandestine report, a Hungarian intelligence estimate concluded in early 1975 that the US would go to unusual lengths in the wake of the Indochina debacle to prevent the emergence of a Communist regime in Portugal. More importantly, the estimate concluded that the US was fully capable of achieving its objectives.² This view presumably was shared by the Soviets.

Indeed, at times the Soviet leaders openly hinted that they expected Western intervention in Portugal. Brezhnev, for example, reportedly told a West German leader in July 1975 that he could not understand why the West had not intervened in Portugal at the first sign of unrest. He added that this would have been accepted by the Soviets—albeit publicly condemned—because Portugal “belongs” in the Western camp.³

C. Soviet Assessment of PCP Prospects Pessimistic

In any case, the Soviets apparently had little faith in the ability of the Portuguese Communists to maintain themselves in power whatever the extent of Western intervention. Soviet views of the PCP's prospects—in contrast to those of many Western observers—were tinged with pessimism even when the Portuguese Party was at the apogee of its power. Thus, in May 1975, at a time when the PCP was in the midst of an all-out offensive against its opponents, a Soviet official in Moscow privately told a Western Communist that the PCP could not strengthen its position without the support of the Portuguese military, a fact which required it to subordinate its more immediate ambitions to the overriding need to maintain the sympathy of the military.⁴

A final factor militating against a Soviet involvement on the side of the Portuguese Communists was the ambivalent reaction of Western Communists to the rise of the Portuguese Party. Some of the most important of these Parties—notably the Italian and Spanish—vocally criticized the revolutionary militance of the PCP, which threatened to undermine their own efforts to present themselves as moderate and “democratic” movements. Moscow's support for the PCP was certain to complicate its relations with these Parties, which were much more important than the PCP both because of their size and because of the greater strategic significance of their countries.

D. Ideological Influence on Soviet Policy Goals

As suggested above, a sober and cynical calculation of political interest would have led the Soviets to shy away from any direct involvement with the PCP. That they did not can be attributed to ideological considerations—their need to justify their policy programs before their own political constituencies in ideological terms. This need can be seen, for example, in their efforts to justify their pursuit of detente with the West as a contribution to the world revolutionary process. This is a standard theme of Soviet spokesmen, who argue that detente, by lowering the level of East-West tensions, increases the political acceptability of Communist Parties to non-Communists and improves their prospects for political gains.*

This claim helps explain the attention and support Moscow accorded the PCP. By early 1975 it had become the most conspicuous representative of Western European Communism, and was cited by the Soviets as an example of how Soviet policy facilitated Communist advances in the capitalist world. The Soviet leaders were particularly in need of some such demonstration at that time to make up for the psychological setback represented by the fall of the Allende regime in Chile in September 1973. This debacle led many Communists both in East and West to question the possibility of a “peaceful” road to socialism. Some Soviets—but not all—concluded that Allende's fatal weakness lay in his failure to weed his

* The Soviet hand was apparent in the wording of the Document adopted by the CECP. It asserted that detente “create(s) optimum conditions for the development of the struggle of the working class and all democratic forces.”

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Soviet Party Secretary B. N. Ponomarev (middle) greets Portuguese Party leader Alvaro Cunhal (left) at the latter's arrival in Moscow at the head of a Portuguese government delegation in 1974. Despite the appearance of Ponomarev at the airport, the visit produced an agreement to play down the links between the two Parties.

enemies out of positions of power before they could coalesce against him, and in his unpreparedness to use force against them. This conclusion no doubt inclined Moscow to respond favorably to the PCP, which showed no comparable reluctance in 1974-1975 to take the offensive against its rivals.

Even without the experience of Chile, the ideological orthodoxy of the PCP would have attracted Soviet support. The Portuguese Party, both before and after its appearance on the Portuguese political stage, has distinguished itself by its uncritical support of the Soviets on both ideological and policy questions. It has backed Moscow on every one of the key issues which have divided the Communist movement—the Sino-Soviet quarrel, Czechoslovakia, and Moscow's claim to leadership of the Communist movement. Moreover, the PCP's early successes provided welcome support for the Soviets in their running debate with the dissident Parties of the West, serving as "proof" that loyal support for Moscow was not incompatible with political success.*

* Soviet Party Secretary and International Department Chief, B. N. Ponomarev, for example, claimed in January 1975 that the triumph of the PCP had demonstrated the importance of a "consistent Marxist-Leninist line." Ponomarev, no doubt, had "inconsistent" Marxist-Leninists like the Italians and Spanish in mind when he spoke.

E. Efforts to Limit Involvement in Portugal

Moscow's reluctance from the outset to needlessly jeopardize its relations with the West was visible in its efforts to maintain a low official profile during the height of the Portuguese political crisis. The behavior of the Soviet diplomatic community in Lisbon—diplomatic relations were established on 10 June 1974—was tailored to maintain a pose of noninvolvement. Despite the presence of a Soviet diplomatic complement of about 30 in Lisbon, the Soviet Ambassador and his staff did their best to stay in the background. This was evident in their failure to develop any form of special relationship with the leftist and pro-Soviet Vasco Goncalves, who served as Premier from September 1974 to September 1975, or to put themselves forward as advisors to the Portuguese Communists. With similar discretion, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's foreign policy report to a Soviet Central Committee plenum in April 1975—at a time when the Portuguese Communists had launched an effort to oust their rivals from the government—barely touched on Soviet relations with the Communist movement, and failed to mention Portugal at all.

Moscow also did its best to play down the links between the Portuguese Party and the CPSU and other Parties. It was officially announced, for exam-

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ple, that the PCP leader, Alvaro Cunhal, on his return to Lisbon on 30 April 1974, had come from Paris, when in fact he had merely changed planes there on his way home from exile in Eastern Europe. On another occasion, Soviet officials are reported to have intervened to block a pro-PCP demonstration by the Austrian Party.⁵

Such a stance was reportedly endorsed by the Portuguese Communists themselves, since, besides helping to protect the Soviet Union's diplomatic position with the West, it served to enhance the domestic political appeal of the PCP as an "independent" movement. According to one report, Cunhal asked Moscow in November 1974 to avoid any overly demonstrative support for the PCP.⁶

Even Soviet press coverage of the Portuguese revolution was tailored to de-emphasize the Soviet involvement in Portugal. Soviet reportage initially was limited to factual reports and replays of PCP statements. In fact, the first direct Soviet press commentary on developments in Portugal did not appear until 21 February 1975, almost 10 months after the revolution.⁷

F. Extent of Soviet Involvement

The Soviets remained committed to this stance of ostensible noninvolvement until the summer of 1975. In practice, Moscow's assertions of noninterest in the affairs of post-revolutionary Portugal had always been compromised by the steady flow of Soviet money to the PCP. The precise amounts of the Soviet subsidy are unknown, but they were enough to make the PCP relatively affluent in comparison with its political competition (as measured by such tangible criteria as the number of posters, sound trucks, and full-time organizers visible in electoral campaigns). The Soviets took care, however, to confine their delivery of funds to clandestine channels, a practice which helped support their hands-off pose.

Soviet behavior changed during the period July-September 1975, when the Portuguese Socialists and Centrists, emboldened by their success in the April elections to a Constituent Assembly, seized control of the streets and began to stir up popular resentment of the Communists. Moreover, they were successful enough to cause the Soviets to air publicly their fears that another "Chile"—which would result in the total

destruction of the Communist Party—was in the making.*

This prospect was sufficient to stir the Soviets from their pose of noninvolvement. The obliteration of the Portuguese Party at the hands of its enemies, *a la* Chile, would have undermined the ideological underpinnings of Soviet detente policies, that is the claim that these policies have paved the way for radical political and social change in the capitalist world. More importantly, the destruction of the PCP would have damaged the prestige of the Soviet leader most closely associated with detente—General Secretary Brezhnev.

The change was most immediately apparent in the harder line taken toward the Portuguese Socialists in the Soviet press, which until July had balanced criticism of their anti-Communist actions with pleas for a return to the alliance with the PCP. Now the Soviet organs went over to a frontal assault on the Socialists. The leaders of the Portuguese Socialist Party (PSP) were charged with having "deserted openly" to the ranks of the anti-Communists.⁸

At the same time, the Soviets became more active in rallying support for the PCP. Whereas only a few months earlier they had discouraged public demonstrations of foreign Communist support for the PCP, they now began to organize manifestations of "international solidarity" with the PCP. The first sign of this came on 24 July, when *Pravda* approvingly reported the Belgian Communist Party Chairman's appeal for European leftists to lend "maximum support" to the cause of the Portuguese revolution.⁹ Behind the scenes, Soviet officials were also active in promoting international support for the PCP. For example, a denunciation of Western interference in the internal affairs of Portugal which appeared in the Austrian Communist newspaper *Volkstümme* on 20 August reportedly was printed on the direct orders of the Soviet Embassy in Vienna.¹⁰

The Soviets coupled these efforts with equally energetic diplomatic efforts to block Western aid to the opponents of the PCP. They launched a concerted

* For an example, see the "Observer" article which appeared in *Pravda* on 19 August 1975. "Observer" stated flatly that "the current reactionary sorties are reminiscent of what happened on the threshold of the fascist coup in Chile." The "Observer" byline itself is unusual, and is used to indicate that an article represents the thinking of the Soviet government.

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effort to dissuade European Socialists from continuing their support for the PSP against the PCP. Even Third World Socialist leaders were asked to use their "influence" with the Portuguese Socialists.¹¹

The Soviets also showed a new willingness to polemicize with the West on the issue of intervention in Portugal. They charged that Western support for Portuguese anti-Communists constituted intervention in Portuguese internal affairs and was in violation of the CSCE agreement. The Soviet press first leveled this charge in early August 1975, only a few days after the CSCE summit had ended.*¹²

G. Soviet Accommodation to PCP's Reduced Status

That Moscow's goals were limited and confined essentially to preventing the destruction of the PCP became apparent with the resolution of the Portuguese crisis in the fall of 1975. This process proceeded in stages. In September, the pro-Communist government of Premier Goncalves was forced out and replaced by a new lineup dominated by the Socialists. In November, the government charged the Communists with involvement in an abortive leftist coup, and used this as a pretext for moving against the remaining Communist positions in the government and the bureaucracy. This process culminated in July 1976, after PCP setbacks in the legislative elections in April and the Presidential elections in June, when the last Communist cabinet member lost his position as a result of the Socialist Party's decision to form a minority government.

Moscow has accepted this process with notable equanimity. Once anti-Communist street violence abated and it became clear that the Communists, even if humbled, would survive, Soviet policy retreated from the advanced positions it had occupied during the summer of 1975. Soviet press condemnations of the dominant Socialists gave way to appeals for a "unity of the left" based on an alliance between the Socialists and Communists.¹³ In effect, the Soviets have returned to the position of ostensible noninvolvement they occupied before mid-1975. According to a clandestine intelligence report, they have now turned the job of maintaining liaison with the PCP over to

the East Germans.¹⁴ The use of the East Germans as a cut-out makes clear their interest in obscuring their links with the Portuguese Communists.

H. Soviet Support of "Moderate" Tactics Consistent

In fact, the resolution of the Portuguese internal crisis, even if at least temporarily in favor of the Socialists, has permitted Soviet policy to return to its original channel. Except during July-August 1975, Moscow has consistently backed the formation of a "united front" of the PCP and the Socialists and other left-wing political elements on the basis of a jointly acceptable program of political and economic change.* The intention is to maximize the influence of the PCP, which is supposed to make use of its superior discipline to dominate any such coalition, while reducing the risk of precipitating another internal crisis. It is unlikely that the decision of the Portuguese Socialists to form a minority government will induce Moscow to turn away from this objective.

Soviet support for a cautious political strategy based on the construction of political alliances and the careful, step-by-step pursuit of social and political objectives—in fact, for a strategy similar in many ways to that pursued by the dissident Italian Party—has been remarkably consistent. It was at the heart of the initial Soviet reaction to the April coup, and it has been since maintained in the face of both political prosperity and adversity for the PCP.

During the initial phase of the Portuguese revolution (April-September 1974), power was shared uneasily between the junior and generally leftist military officers who had engineered the coup, and relatively conservative senior officers and holdovers from the old regime. Moscow's recommendations to the Portuguese Communists were indicated when the Soviet press approvingly noted the PCP's conclusion that the fluid political situation demanded "an extremely flexible but at the same time cautious policy, because haste and miscalculation may lead to a loss of all gains."** Moscow's main emphasis was on the need to unite the forces of the left against the prospect of counterrevolution.

* See, for example, the article by V. Yermakov which appeared in issue 21 of the journal *New Times* in May 1975.

** TASS on 8 June 1974.

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The next phase (September 1974-July 1975) was one in which the apparent prospects of the PCP dramatically brightened. The conservative General Antonio de Spinola was replaced in the Presidency by the much more ambiguous figure of General Francisco da Costa Gomes, and a leftist government with heavy Communist representation was formed. The PCP was emboldened to launch an offensive aimed at purging its rivals from the media and the apparatus of government. The Communist efforts were also aimed against the Socialists and other non-Communist supporters of the revolution, and amounted to a discarding of the "united front" tactics it had previously pursued.

There is considerable evidence that the Soviets did not share the belief of the PCP that its bases of support in the military and in labor were strong enough to enable it to hold power against the opposition of all other organized political forces. Significantly, Moscow's first authoritative public statement on Portugal, published as a lead article in *Pravda* on 21 February 1975, stressed the importance of maintaining the unity of all "democratic forces." *Pravda* warned that a split in the forces of the left would pave the way for a victory of "reaction and fascism."

The collapse of a right-wing coup effort in March 1975 had the effect of increasing the confidence of the PCP. The PCP moved to consolidate its control of the press and broadcast media, and began to demand punitive action against alleged "counterrevolutionaries." Moscow expressed vocal support for the Portuguese Communists, but showed its nervousness by repeating its public warnings against any action which might precipitate a split in the forces of the left.*

I. Moscow's Failure to Dictate PCP Strategy

There is evidence that Moscow privately was much more explicit and brought considerable pressure to bear in an effort to dissuade the PCP from actions which would result in its political isolation. According to a clandestine report, the Soviet Ambassador in Lisbon warned Premier Goncalves a few days after the failure of the March coup that the rush of decrees

* For example, *Pravda* on 25 April 1975—the date of Portugal's first free legislative elections—warned that any effort to force the pace of the revolution would mean the "destruction of the new Portugal."

involving profound political and economic changes should be slowed.¹⁵ Soviet officials reportedly gave the same message to a PCP functionary in Moscow later in the month.¹⁶

Moscow's warnings were without any apparent effect, but they were borne out by the reaction which began to build against the Communists after mid-year. This campaign, led by the Socialists and moderate military officers, focused on efforts to oust the government of Premier Goncalves, and by August had developed irresistible momentum.

Again there is evidence that Moscow's admonitions were ignored by the PCP. According to a clandestine source, the Soviets warned a PCP delegation in mid-July that it was a mistake for them to tie their fortunes so closely to the highly unpopular Vasco Goncalves. At the same time, the Soviets made another effort to persuade the PCP to make peace with the Socialists on the grounds that a perpetuation of their feud could cost the PCP the support of military officers grown weary of political partisanship.*¹⁷

Nonetheless, the PCP continued its war with the Socialists and its support of the Vasco Goncalves government up to the very eve of the latter's ouster on 29 August. Only the unbroken series of political setbacks the PCP has suffered since September 1975 have brought it back to a course of action more in line with Moscow's preferences for caution and carefully phased advances.

J. Limitations on Soviet Influence

Moscow's apparent failure to impose its tactical preferences on the Portuguese Communists in 1975 is all the more noteworthy in view of the fact that the cards appear to have been stacked in Moscow's favor. The PCP was distinguished by its unblemished record of support for the CPSU and its dependence on Soviet financial support. Yet these factors, while quite sufficient to ensure its backing for the main lines of

* It may be argued that Moscow's expressed reservations about the actions of the PCP during this period were made merely to assuage the suspicions of the West regarding Moscow's intentions in Portugal, and that Moscow's continued financial support of the PCP was more indicative of its true preferences. Against this, it must be noted that the Soviets have been extremely reluctant to use the financial weapon even against those Parties with which it has disagreed most profoundly, such as the Spanish, undoubtedly because of the extremely serious—and perhaps irrevocable—effect such an action would have on their relations with that Party.

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Soviet foreign and domestic policy and the Soviet interpretation of points of doctrine, were not adequate to compel it to give up what it regarded as a chance to take power. The behavior of the PCP in 1975, as well as the more publicized dissidence of the French and Italians, is indicative of the problems which the erosion of discipline in the Communist movement can pose for Soviet policy, regardless of the degree to which the CPSU and these Parties may share a community of purpose.

IV. ITALY

A. Are Communist Advances Compatible with Soviet Interests?

Moscow's relations with the PCI confront it with a problem of an entirely different order of magnitude. Despite their occasional differences with the PCP, the Soviets have had no reason to question the basic identity of purpose between themselves and the PCP. In Italy they must eventually confront the question of whether the triumph of a major West European Party—even assuming it can be brought about without causing unacceptable damage to Soviet foreign policy interests—is in the ultimate interests of the Soviet Union. The Italian Party, unlike the Portuguese, has given Moscow grounds to question its Leninist credentials.

There is no sign that the Soviet leaders have seriously faced up to the problem, and it is hardly surprising that they have not done so. For them even to raise the question would be to place in doubt some of the central assumptions of the Soviet system, including the validity of the Soviet system as a model for political and social organization and the vitality of the Leninist ideology they represent.

Events, however, may force the Soviets to face up to the question. The advances registered by the Italian Communists in the legislative elections of June 1976 have made it the near equal of the DC, with 34.4 percent of the vote to 38.7 percent. The outcome has brought it within range of the "historic compromise" with the DC which has been its proclaimed goal since 1973. The PCI envisions a grand coalition in which it would share power on an equal basis with the DC. Moreover, this coalition may have already begun to take shape in the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, where the PCI now holds seven important committee chairmanships.

B. The Nature of the PCI

The PCI's advances are potentially troublesome for the Soviets because of the nature of the Italian Party. In some important respects, it differs from the traditional image of a Marxist-Leninist Party. It is not the Party of a highly disciplined and conspiratorial revolutionary elite, but a mass Party with somewhat looser standards of organizational discipline. It is not an avowed enemy of "bourgeois democracy," but a Party which has prospered under a parliamentary system and whose hopes for power are attached to that system, and which, moreover, has publicly insisted on its commitment to the preservation of that system.

Whereas the central question for Italy's Western Allies is the extent to which Communist participation in the Italian Government would threaten the bases of Italy's constitutional system and alliance commitments, the central question for Moscow is essentially the opposite. To what degree has the PCI's involvement in that system weakened its commitment to force fundamental changes in Italy's domestic and foreign political alignments, and would this commitment be further weakened by participation in government? Would, in fact, a PCI strengthened by participation in government serve as a channel for the intrusion of "subversive" Western ideas into the Communist movement or into the Soviet Union itself?

C. The Question of Goals

The central Soviet concern is with the reliability of the Italian Party's commitment to the traditional goals of orthodox Marxism-Leninism. The most important of these are still—as listed by a leading Soviet ideologue in a recent article—breaking "the economic and political power of the monopolies" and implementing "profound democratic reforms" in the government and press.* In more straightforward terms, the Soviets insist that a Communist Party must be committed to the ultimate imposition of one-party Communist control over the government, press, and all other institutions of public life.

There is no doubt that the Soviet leadership harbors serious misgivings about the PCI leadership's commit-

* A. I. Sobolev, head of the International Communist Movement Section of the CPSU's Institute of Marxism-Leninism, writing in the March 1976 issue of the journal, *The Working Class and the Contemporary World*.

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ment to these goals. According to clandestine intelligence reporting, Soviet officials have regarded Enrico Berlinguer's leadership with considerable suspicion since its inception. They suspect it is motivated more by considerations of short-term political advantage than by revolutionary commitment, and that it is in danger of completely losing sight of its long-term goals.¹⁸

Soviet doubts cannot have been eased by Berlinguer's repeated assertions that not only will the Italian road to Communism differ from that followed by the Soviet Union, but the very shape that Communist society will assume in Italy will be different from that which it has assumed in the Soviet Union. In Berlinguer's words, Italian Communism will reflect the "deep-seated democratic traditions" of Italy, and among other things, will be characterized by a multi-party system, trade union autonomy, freedom of speech and religion, and a mixed economy combining elements of central planning and free enterprise.* Altogether, it is a political vision far removed from the Soviet system of absolute one-party rule, and potentially dangerous to the stability of the Soviet system—if Berlinguer means what he says.

The Soviets, however, are not certain that he does mean what he says. Distasteful as it may be to the Soviets, Berlinguer's line is perfectly acceptable to them as a tactical gambit designed to bring Communist influence to bear on the government. This at least is how some Soviet officials appear to understand it and to represent it to their superiors.¹⁹

D. Soviet Tolerance of PCI Tactical Line

Indeed, the Soviets have not objected to the PCI's tactics. Specifically, they have not opposed the PCI's advocacy of an "historic compromise" nor its pledges to maintain the constitutional system and alliance obligations.

The Soviets have shown no inclination to attack the fundamental tenets of the PCI's domestic line even when relations have been most strained, as in the period after the PCI condemnation of the occupation of Czechoslovakia. The Soviet position at that time was spelled out by a ranking official of the International Department of the Central Committee/Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC/CPSU).

* From Berlinguer's speech to the CECP in East Berlin on 1 July 1976.

He was harshly critical of the PCI's stance on Czechoslovakia which he characterized as a foreign policy of expediency. Rather than criticizing the domestic line of the PCI, however, the official demanded an intensification of the tactics of accommodation with other political forces. He stressed the need for the PCI to work for unity of action with all leftist forces in the country, including Catholics. The PCI was at all costs to avoid becoming a divisive force in the country.²⁰

This endorsement was reaffirmed the following year, as it has been periodically since then. Moscow treated the PCI's triumphs in the regional elections of June 1975 and in the June 1976 national elections as proof of the efficacy of these tactics. The regional elections were hailed as a "graphic example" of the successes which Communists had been able to win by allying themselves with non-Communists in a struggle for common objectives.* Brezhnev similarly endorsed the most recent successes of the PCI—even while warning that it must take care not to lose its revolutionary character.**

E. PCI Tactics Coincide with Soviet Needs

Indeed, when the Soviets have taken issue with the PCI on specific issues of Italian domestic politics, it has been to chide the PCI for adventurism and stress the need for caution and "statesmanlike" action. Thus, during the Italian economic and political crisis in the spring of 1973, the Soviets repeatedly warned the PCI against any action which might "aggravate" the crisis. Brezhnev made it clear to Berlinguer during a meeting in Moscow in March of that year that the USSR's interest in good political and economic relations with the West demanded stability in Italy.²¹

Similarly, the Soviets reacted with concern to the Italian divorce referendum in 1974, which pitted the PCI and other secular organizations against the Church. According to a clandestine source, the Soviets argued that PCI support for the right of divorce would serve to isolate it from those Catholic bourgeois circles whose support it needed to attain its objectives.²²

Insofar as differences on the tactical line followed by the Italian Communists have been the source of

* By Politburo member B. N. Ponomarev, in a speech commemorating the 7th Comintern Congress, which enunciated the doctrine of the Popular Front.

** At the CECP in East Berlin.

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difficulties between them and the Soviets, it has been as often as not the "moderation" of the Soviets which has been at the root of it. Moscow's apprehension about the consequences for Soviet policy interests of political or economic instability in Italy has been expressed in blunt terms to the PCI, and has fed the suspicion that Moscow would be only too ready to sacrifice the PCI's interests to its own.

According to a clandestine report, Brezhnev went so far as to suggest to Berlinguer in 1973 that in Moscow's eyes, the "historic compromise" could go too far. Brezhnev hinted that the Soviets would not like to see the PCI move beyond the stage of influencing the Italian government to the stage of actual participation in a government because this would cause uneasiness in the West and might damage the prospects for detente.²³

Moscow's initial reaction to the 1976 elections has been a mixture of approval and caution, and it has specifically avoided supporting full-fledged PCI participation in a coalition government. This is an indication that Soviet support for the PCI's efforts is still keyed to its ability to avoid generating a domestic or international political upheaval. Moscow's own political needs have had the ironic result of aligning it behind the cautious Berlinguer, a leader for whom, as already noted, they have in other respects little regard.

F. Soviet and PCI Differences Center on Issue of Autonomy

One of the reasons the Soviets have been unhappy with the leadership of the Italian Party has been the increasing propensity it has shown to openly come out against Moscow on foreign policy issues in which its interests are directly at stake. The two areas in which Soviet and Italian Communist interests most directly conflict involve relations within the Communist movement—where the PCI opposes Moscow's claims to leadership—and within Western Europe—where the PCI does not share the hostility of the Soviets toward all institutions of European unity.

The former has been by far the most serious source of conflict between the two Parties, at least up to this point. The issue is *autonomy*. The Soviets still seek to arrogate to themselves the right to rule on the appropriateness of the policies of the PCI, as of other Parties. The PCI for its part has openly resisted this Soviet effort since 1964, when the final testament of

the PCI leader Palmiro Togliatti publicly made the case for "polycentrism" in the international movement.

The Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a landmark in the development of the PCI's resistance to the CPSU's claim to authority over the Communist movement. The PCI not only denounced the Soviet invasion, but rejected the "Brezhnev Doctrine" with which the Soviets sought to justify their actions. The latter claimed for Moscow the right to intervene in defense of Communism whenever and wherever it perceived a threat to its existence, a claim with obviously dangerous implications for the independence of other Parties.

At the same time, the position that the Western Parties have taken on this issue puts in question the entire basis of the Soviet position in Eastern Europe. Berlinguer's explicit reference to Czechoslovakia at the East Berlin summit made it clear that the troublesome issue of the Soviet role in Eastern Europe, even if dormant, is not dead.

Moreover, Berlinguer linked the PCI's criticism of Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia to the "more general problem" of the "relationship between democracy and socialism," thereby implicitly raising the threat that the PCI might go on to take issue with Soviet actions in defense of orthodoxy elsewhere, perhaps even in the Soviet Union. The PCI heretofore has been consciously wary of challenging Soviet actions in Moscow's own sphere, but there have recently been some cracks in its veneer of caution. Moscow undoubtedly took note of the PCI Party newspaper *L'Unita*'s reference to an appeal for support to the participants in the East Berlin summit from Andrey Sakharov and other Soviet dissidents. According to a clandestine report, the Soviets had already protested in late 1975 a PCI decision to permit its Party press to reprint items critical of the USSR which had previously appeared in other newspapers.²⁴

The same concern for autonomy has been responsible for PCI resistance to Soviet efforts to move against the Chinese within the Communist movement. The Italians have little sympathy for Maoist doctrine, but have firmly resisted any action which might restrict the right of any Party to determine its own course autonomously. The effort by the Italians and other dissident Parties to obtain assurances that the CECP would not be used by the Soviets for anti-Chinese

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purposes was a principal factor in the two-year delay in the convocation of the East Berlin meeting.

G. Portugal Strains PCI-CPSU Relationship

The PCI line on Portugal directly contradicted that of the Soviets. The PCP's machinations, particularly its success in banning the Portuguese Christian Democrats after the March 1975 coup attempt, had a direct impact on the Italian scene, where the PCI's hopes for a share of power depended on an alliance with the Italian DC. The PCI reacted with public disavowals of the PCP's actions and with an open flirtation with Mario Soares, the leader of the Portuguese Socialists and the principal enemy of the PCP. The gulf between the Italian and Portuguese Parties was marked by the PCI's attendance at the PSP Congress in January 1975 and its absence from the PCP Congress three months earlier.

However, the PCI's differences with Moscow did not reach their peak until August 1975. On 6 August, an article by a Soviet ideologue named K. I. Zarodov, the editor of the Prague-based journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, appeared in *Pravda*. Zarodov directed his attacks against unnamed "modern conciliators," who he charged, were unable or unwilling to recognize the existence of a revolutionary situation. He asserted that when Communists had a preponderance of actual strength, as distinct from electoral strength, they should use it. Zarodov, in effect, charged that "some" Parties had confused means with ends, and had given up revolution in favor of transient parliamentary advantages. His comments were clearly applicable to the Italians, who had criticized the PCP for its efforts to overturn the results of the elections in which it had been defeated.*

The timing of the article also suggested that the Italians were intended to be among the primary addressees of Zarodov's strictures. It appeared in *Pravda* the day before a PCI delegation arrived in Moscow for talks with the Soviets, with the problem of Portugal at the head of the agenda. A PCI official later alleged that the delegation travelled to Moscow to intercede with the Soviets on behalf and at the behest of the Portuguese Socialists.²⁵

* The authoritative nature of the article was indicated the following month when Brezhnev personally received the author in a well publicized meeting.

The results of the Zarodov article were much more significant than the specific nature of his charges. These had been heard more than once before in the course of Moscow's intermittent debates with the dissident Communists. This time, however, they had the effect of accelerating the PCI's theretofore tentative efforts to dissociate itself from some of the most repressive features of Soviet doctrine and practice. These efforts have grown into a wholesale rejection—at least in theory—of the kind of one-party regimes established in Moscow and the Warsaw Pact countries. The process was capped by Berlinguer's assertion in East Berlin that the "models of socialist societies followed in Eastern European countries" have no relevance for the countries of Western Europe.

H. The PCI and Eurocommunism

Of even greater import for the future of Soviet relations with the PCI and European Communism as a whole was the impetus the quarrel over the Zarodov theses gave to the Italian Party's efforts to assert a role of regional leadership. Within two weeks of Brezhnev's September meeting with Zarodov, Berlinguer and the PCF's Marchais had met in Paris for consultations. They met again in Rome on 15 November.

The fruit of these consultations was contained in a joint declaration released the same day.* It resembled a similar declaration signed by the Italian and

* The key passages of this document are worth quoting in detail. They are: "In this spirit (of democracy) all the freedoms—the results both of the great democratic bourgeois revolutions and of the great popular struggles of this century which have been led by the working class—must be guaranteed and developed. This applies to the freedom of thought and expression, of the press, assembly and association, the freedom to demonstrate, the free movement of people at home and abroad, the inviolability of private life, religious freedoms, the complete freedom of expression of currents of thought and of every philosophical, cultural and artistic freedom. The French and Italian Communists declare themselves in favor of the plurality of political parties, of the right to existence and activity of opposition parties, of the free formation and the possibility of the democratic alternation of majorities and minorities, of the secularity and democratic functions of the state, and of the independence of justice. . . .

The PCI and PCF assign to all these conditions of democratic life the status of principles. Their position is not tactical but stems from their analysis of the specific objectives and historical conditions of their countries and their consideration of international experiences as a whole."

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Spanish Parties in July in its reaffirmation of the two Parties' commitment to parliamentary democracy and disavowal of authoritarian intentions. It was much more significant than the former document, however, in that the French Party had traditionally functioned as an ally of the CPSU and as the PCI's chief rival for leadership of the Western Parties. The tactical alliance of these two mass Parties, by far the most important in Western Europe, if it endures, could well do mortal damage to the CPSU's efforts to maintain its authority over the movement in the West.

The unease which the document aroused in Moscow was demonstrated by the failure of the Soviet press to mention it. A terse TASS release issued on 17 November noted only that the French and Italian Party leaders had met for talks on "questions of mutual interest." There has been no further public comment.

Even before this, the increasingly Western European orientation of the PCI represented a problem for the Soviets. The Berlinguer leadership of the PCI professes to see its own future and that of Italy in the context of a socialist Europe, but it is the "little Europe" of the European Communities (EC). It supports and participates in the institutions of the EC, and has increasingly tended to reduce its participation in Soviet-dominated international organizations in favor of participation in Western European organizations. It is an active and constructive participant in the European Parliament. It has changed its status in the Soviet-controlled World Federation of Trade Unions from that of full to associate member in order to qualify for membership in the European Trade Union Confederation, and it is a staunch public supporter of the EC. It has also turned its attention to improving relations with the powerful Social-Democratic Parties of Northern Europe.

I. Moscow's Assessment

The Soviets have reacted to these developments with some ambivalence. On the one hand, they have been disturbed by the anti-Soviet overtones of the PCI's efforts to cast itself in a European image, particularly its tendency to treat both the US and the USSR equally as outsiders in Western Europe. On the other hand, they have shown a considerable willingness to accept the maneuvers of the PCI as unpleasant necessities imposed on it by the realities of its political environment.

They can take some comfort in the fact that in its internal organization, the PCI is still structured on recognizably Marxist-Leninist lines, emphasizing hierarchical control from the top. This is a key point to the Soviet leaders, as demonstrated by their propensity to privately lecture Italian leaders when they detect signs of slackness in the Italian Party's control of its subordinate organizations.²⁶ Despite some reservations on the part of the Soviets, the PCI's internal standards still seem acceptable to them.

Beyond this, their tolerance for the PCI rests on their conviction that the expansion of the influence and power of the PCI are in the long-term strategic interests of the USSR. One veteran Soviet commentator recently expressed the Soviet view of the implications of PCI—or PCF—participation in government for the strategic rivalry between East and West in unusually candid terms. He saw both military and political advantages for the Soviet Union. In his view, the "operational plans" of the NATO Alliance would be "upset" and "a left-wing breakthrough would strike straight at (the) backbone" of the EC.*

J. Moscow's Means of Control Limited

Moscow's difficulties with the Italian Communists are compounded by its relative lack of leverage over them. The channels of influence which are usually at its disposal in dealing with foreign Communists are in the case of the PCI either partially or completely blocked.

Money—Moscow's role as the paymaster of the international movement—in the case of the PCI has become a less effective instrument. Soviet financial assistance is still important to the PCI, but it is no longer vital. According to clandestine intelligence reports, the relative importance of the Soviet subsidy to the PCI budget has shrunk. According to the most recent information, it has varied between \$4.5 and \$7.5 million annually in recent years. At the same time Soviet financial assistance has become relatively less important. Soviet contributions have remained relatively stable, but the PCI's own financial resources—dues and contributions, income from Party enterprises, and subsidies from the state under a new political finance law—have grown. The estimated Soviet subsidy in 1974 constituted a share somewhat less than 20 percent of the annual acknowledged

* Ernst Henri, writing in *Kommunist* No. 9 of June 1976.

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budget of \$86.6 million.* The limited effectiveness of money as a weapon was demonstrated when the Soviets attempted to put it to use after the PCI's condemnation of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Moscow's threats to reduce its financial support for the PCI, and some actual cutbacks did not cause the PCI to abandon its opposition to the Czechoslovak occupation.

A second traditional channel of Soviet influence over the affairs of other Parties—the presence of reliable "friends" of the USSR within their leaderships—is an increasingly less helpful factor within the PCI. Berlinguer has steadily placed his own allies in positions of influence and authority within the Party since becoming Secretary General in 1972. In the process, many Moscow loyalists have been eased out. This process peaked at the 14th Congress of the PCI in March 1975. The pro-Soviet Armando Cossuta was dropped from the Party Secretariat. His departure apparently left the Soviets with no dependable and well-placed supporters at the top levels of the PCI. According to one report, officials within the International Department of the CC/CPSU were reduced to hoping that Gianni Cervetti, a new member of the PCI Secretariat, could be cultivated as a "successor" to Cossuta.²⁷

A final element of Soviet influence within the PCI, the loyalty to the USSR of many of the activists who form the base of the PCI, is by no means a negligible factor. The orthodox Marxist-Leninists, who are variously estimated to comprise 20-25 percent of the Party membership serve to inhibit—but not prohibit—the leadership of the PCI from direct clashes with the CPSU. The PCI leadership apparently is taking direct action to deal with this problem of dual loyalties within the ranks of the PCI. According to a reliable clandestine source, two officials of the CC/CPSU who were in attendance at the March Congress of the PCI, complained of the steady drop in participation by PCI members in political training programs conducted by the CPSU. According to the Soviets, PCI participation at this time is practically nil. This, as both the Soviets and Italians are undoubtedly aware, will eventually weaken the ties between Moscow and Italian Communist activists.²⁸

* This information is taken from the OPR Research Study, 811-75, "The Communist Party of Italy," June 1975, SECRET//NOFORN/NOCON/ORCON.

K. The Bottom Line

In the last analysis, the Soviets cannot—any more than Italy's Western Allies—be certain which PCI is the real one. Neither can they count on being able to determine the course of development within the PCI. They can only hope—as they still do—that the ultimate aims of the Italian Party correspond to their own goals, and take such action as they can to maintain the links between the PCI and the CPSU and to bring to bear the influence which remains to them.

V. SPAIN

"The defense of the Soviet Union and the socialist system in its entirety is an obligation and a necessity." (From an official history of the PCE, 1960.)

"Moscow, where our dreams first began to come true, was for a long time a kind of Rome for us. We spoke of the great October Socialist Revolution as if it were Christmas. This was the period of our infancy. Today we have grown up. . . . We are beginning to lose the characteristics of a church." (Santiago Carillo, Secretary General of the PCE, speaking at the East Berlin Conference of Communist Parties in June 1976.)

A. The Scope of Moscow's Spanish Problem

These two citations mark the path traversed by the PCE in the course of a few years, and are suggestive of the difficulties which the Soviets face in dealing with the PCE. These difficulties are both more and less serious than those they must confront in coping with the PCI.

They are more serious in that the PCE has been more outspoken and consistent in its rejection of Moscow's authoritarian practices and doctrines than the PCI, and at least equally determined in its opposition to Moscow's efforts to assert its authority over the movement. Along with the PCI, it was one of the most consistent opponents of Moscow's efforts to push through a document which would serve as a binding statement of principle in East Berlin.

They are less serious in that Spain is intrinsically less important than Italy, and the Spanish Party is both much smaller and much farther removed from power than the Italian. While the Italian Party has already

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become in many ways an unacknowledged partner in government with the Christian Democrats, the Spanish Party has yet to win the right to operate legally in Spain. Its comparative weakness means that the Soviets are not under the pressure of time to resolve the differences between them.

B. Origins of Moscow's Differences with the PCE

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia precipitated the first open rift between the PCE and the CPSU, even though there were earlier signs that the PCE had begun to distance itself from the CPSU. The most significant of these were the close and friendly relations maintained between the PCE and the Romanian Communists in the mid-1960s, at a time when relations between Bucharest and Moscow were at their nadir.

The Spanish Party's gradual disaffection from the CPSU was a product of both internal and external factors. Following the failure of an experiment with terrorist tactics in the 1950s, a new Party leadership under General Secretary Santiago Carillo Solares decided that the PCE's only chance for success lay in collaboration with the other potentially anti-Franco forces in Spanish society. This shift coincided with the turn away from Cold War confrontation begun under Khrushchev, and was encouraged by the Soviet leader. The PCE leadership was shaken by his ouster in October 1964, and was slow to warm to his successors.

This inauspicious start to the relationship between the Spanish Communists and the reigning Soviet leadership proved to be a portent of things to come. The PCE's domestic situation and the political tactics this seemed to dictate tended to bring them into alignment with the more "reformist" elements of Western Communism—especially the PCI—and increasingly distanced them from the Soviets. Relations between the two Parties were further aggravated by Moscow's persistent inclination to put the interests of Spanish Communism second to the needs of Soviet diplomacy, as demonstrated by indications of Soviet interest in a diplomatic rapprochement with the Franco regime (in 1970 the Soviets opened a commercial office in Madrid which has exercised quasi-diplomatic functions).

Following the PCE's public denunciation of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, the

differences between the two Parties rapidly expanded to include most of the points at issue in the Communist movement. The PCE opposed Soviet efforts to ostracize the Chinese and defended China's right to define its own policies, and it has continued to take vigorous issue with Moscow over Czechoslovakia. Along with the Italians, Yugoslavs, Romanians, and other dissident Parties the Spaniards also refused to fully endorse the document of the International Communist Conference in 1969.

The results of a plenum of the Central Committee of the PCE in September 1973 dramatically demonstrated just how far the process of deterioration had advanced. A report submitted to the plenum and later published as an article by Manuel Ascarate Diaz, a close associate of Carillo, amounted to a virtual declaration of independence from the CPSU. It broke sharply with the Soviets on issues of both domestic and foreign policy.



Santiago Carillo Solares, the belligerently independent leader of the Spanish Communist Party.

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On the domestic front, it went well beyond advocacy of a tactical alliance with other anti-Franco forces—which the Soviets could support—to renounce the goal of a single-party state and to proclaim itself in favor of “democratic socialism.” Even more strikingly, it renounced the concept of “an official philosophy” and pledged its support of an “open ideological struggle between all democratic trends.” It asserted that to do otherwise would be to force a new regime to construct a police state. It went on to repudiate “the specific features of other revolutions and the particular experiences of other Communist Parties,” in words which were clearly directed at the CPSU. The PCE went on to enunciate its support for “a truly European alternative.” This it defined as a “Europe which is not subject to the Atlantic burden but which maintains good relations with the US, as with the USSR and China and other countries.”

Finally, the PCE document elevated its suspicions of the Soviet commitment to Western Communism to the level of Party dogma. It proclaimed the need to struggle against any tendency “to identify coexistence with the ‘status quo’, and detente with the freezing of the existing social structure in the world” It went on to cite a number of specific Soviet actions which contributed to its fear that Moscow was indifferent to the cause of Spanish and other European Communists.²⁹

The Spanish Party has gone on to demonstrate its disaffection with Moscow in deeds as well as words. The PCE has been a firm supporter of the Portuguese Socialists, a stance marked by its attendance at the PSP Congress and its failure to appear at the PCP Congress, and it has worked quietly to rally support for the PSP in the European left.

C. Moscow's Failure to Assert Control Over the PCE

The post-Czechoslovak experience has demonstrated that the PCE is effectively beyond Moscow's reach, even though it has made a major effort to crush the Spanish dissidents. At first impression, the levers available to Moscow would appear to have been sufficient to bend the PCE to its will. While even in the 1960s the PCE had had considerable success in meeting its own financial needs from contributions, it was in great need of the technical and logistical support which enabled it to function as an underground organization within Spain: press and broad-

casting facilities, housing, jobs and office facilities for its militants abroad, aid in establishing cover for clandestine activities, and courier services. For this assistance, the PCE was heavily dependent on the Soviets, their East European allies, and the then-loyalist French Party. In addition, many veteran members of the PCE and of the civil war retained a loyalty to the Soviet Union. Others, including the civil war heroine and current honorary Chairman of the PCE, Dolores Ibarurri (La Passionaria), had lived in exile in the Soviet Union and received stipends from the Soviet state.

The initial Soviet reaction to the PCE's denunciation of its actions in Czechoslovakia was an attempt to force the PCE into submission. Subsidies from the CPSU and other Bloc Parties were cut back sharply—but not cut off—as a reminder to the Spanish of the CPSU's control over the financial resources of the PCE. According to one report, Soviet Politburo member M. A. Suslov violently reminded Santiago Carrillo at a meeting in 1968 that the PCE was “only living by the grace of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party.”³⁰

D. Soviet Efforts to Split the PCE

The most serious threat to the PCE was not the cutback in Bloc funding, which to a considerable extent was offset by the success of fund drives conducted by the PCE among European leftists and by contributions from sympathetic Parties, including the PCI. Soviet sponsorship of a dissident, pro-Soviet faction within the leadership of the PCE was a much more serious danger. Nevertheless, the initial effort failed, and by 1970 the leading pro-Soviets had been expelled from the PCE. Three of them—Eduardo Garcia-Lopez, Agustin Gomez de Segura Pagola, and Enrique Lister—then joined together to form a new, “authentic” Communist Party which eventually adopted the name, the Spanish Communist Workers Party (PCOE).

The Soviets lent the dissidents both material and moral support. As a result of Soviet subsidies, the dissidents were able to launch a rival publication to the official organ of the PCE and to finance a significant organizational effort. Moscow also facilitated their efforts to proselytize the large and influential Spanish Communist exile community within the USSR. On the other hand, Soviet support had distinct limits, and Moscow was parsimonious

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enough to arouse frequent complaints from Lister and other dissident leaders.

Still more significant to the ultimate defeat of the dissidents was the Soviet failure to formally acknowledge them as the "true" representatives of Spanish Communism. Indeed, Soviet support to the PCOE was seriously restricted by Moscow's reluctance to force matters to the stage of an open and complete break with the PCE, or to be openly identified with an effort to split the Spanish Party.

As already noted, Soviet funding of the official PCE, while reduced, was not ended. Nor did contacts between the PCE and the CPSU cease. Even during the very months when the struggle between the Santiago Carillo group and the pro-Soviet dissidents was most tense, both the PCE and the CPSU carefully kept up a facade of fraternal cordiality, for example, by continuing to meet occasionally.

The PCE leaders' motivation in contributing to this charade was simple: They did not want to give the Soviets a pretext for ending all forms of support. Moscow's motivation was more complex. Its reluctance to launch a frontal attack on the PCE may have reflected concern at the impact this would have on relations with other European Parties, including the French Party, within which the PCE enjoyed widespread support.

Perhaps the most important factor in Moscow's caution was its lack of confidence in the ability of the dissidents to achieve their goals. The Soviets made it quite clear to the leaders of the PCOE that an increase in Soviet support was contingent on their ability to establish a solid political base. According to one report, the Soviets would have preferred that the Lister-Garcia-Gomez faction remain in the PCE to influence the Carillo leadership from within, and regarded their open defiance of Carillo and his adherents as "adventurism." The Soviets reportedly informed the dissidents in 1970, possibly at their founding meeting in August, that they would lend their full support to them only if they succeeded in controlling the organization of the PCE Congress scheduled for 1971.³¹ However, not only was this not accomplished, by 1973 the PCOE itself had been overcome by factionalism, and two of the original three leaders had been again purged. The factionalism within the PCOE made it clear to both the PCE and

the CPSU that the PCOE was not a serious rival to the official Party.

Faced with seemingly incompatible alternatives, the Soviets have followed an erratic middle course in an effort to avoid any irrevocable policy commitment. Thus, in February 1974 they took public issue with the policy position adopted by the PCE the previous September, charging among other things that it "reeks of nationalism" and "lacks one ounce of proletarian internationalism."³² Almost simultaneously, however, they undertook moves designed to promote a formal reconciliation with the PCE. Franco's illness in July 1974 evidently acted to spur the pace of Soviet efforts. These bore fruit in October 1974, when a PCE delegation headed by Carillo and Azcarate visited Moscow for talks with Soviet leaders. The talks produced a paper confirmation of the "normalization" of relations between the two Parties in the form of a joint communique which pledged both Parties to contribute to an improvement in relations and to the "voluntary coordination" of their actions. It also pledged both Parties not to support "splitters" within the ranks of the other, which in effect constituted a Soviet pledge not to continue its support of the Lister group.

The reconciliation was more apparent than real, however. Notably, the Soviets have acted covertly to keep the Lister faction in operation. Although they have avoided direct support for the PCOE, the Spanish dissidents apparently have continued to receive a trickle of support from other Bloc countries, who are clearly acting as Moscow's agents in this instance.³³ (The East Germans had earlier maintained a similar relationship with the official PCE when the Party's relations with the Soviets were still frozen.)

E. Soviet and PCE Interests Are Contradictory

Even though in some ways the political line of the PCE conforms to Soviet preferences, at least in its emphasis on moderate, "democratic" goals calculated to soothe the anxieties of Spain's neighbors, the Soviets have ample reason to question whether its long-term objectives are in line with the interests of the Soviet Union. The Soviets must be particularly disturbed by the Spanish Party's advocacy of diplomatic equidistance between the US and USSR, and by its critical views of the main lines of Soviet foreign policy. On this latter point, it goes well beyond the PCI, which,

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on matters not immediately pertaining to its own interests, is generally supportive of Soviet foreign policy positions. The PCE, on the other hand, has questioned the Soviet rationale for East-West detente and the relevance of this Soviet policy for the goals of West European Communists.

Moreover, the PCE has been at least as critical of Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as it has of the US role in Western Europe. It has coupled its demands for an end to the US military presence in Western Europe to an equally explicit demand for a Soviet pullback from Eastern Europe. Carillo has even gone on record, as in a *Time* interview in 1975, that he would not be disposed to demand the withdrawal of US forces from Spain until Soviet forces had been withdrawn from Czechoslovakia.³⁴

Nevertheless, the Soviets can see little immediate alternative to efforts to moderate their dispute with the PCE. The mere fact that its prospects have improved under the monarchical government of Juan Carlos—and it is now deemed likely to be legalized in the foreseeable future—has heightened Moscow's interest in settling their differences.

Their ability to succeed in this effort, however, is questionable, not least because the immediate interests of the CPSU and the PCE are quite different. The Soviets are inclined, by reason of their strategic rivalry with Washington, to strive to enhance their political and economic influence with the Spanish Government. As a first step, this demands the establishment of full diplomatic relations, which have not existed since the Spanish Civil War. The PCE insists that Moscow must make any diplomatic rapprochement with Madrid contingent on Spanish government concessions to the PCE. Any Soviet gesture toward Juan Carlos in the absence of such concessions will inevitably embitter its relations with the PCE.

Against this immediate incompatibility of interests, the Soviets can only persist in their efforts to wear down the PCE's truculent independence. As one way of doing this, according to a clandestine intelligence source, the Soviets are now promoting contacts between "loyal" Parties and the PCE.³⁵ In the last analysis, Moscow is reduced to pinning its hope on a more favorable evolution within the PCE leadership after the departure of Carillo. If this hope should be unfounded, Moscow is likely to lend even less weight to the interests of the PCE than it now does, with

predictably negative consequences for its relations with that Party.

VI. FRANCE

A. Importance of the PCF

Moscow's relations with the PCF are infinitely more important to it than its ties with the PCE, and the cleavages which have suddenly appeared between the PCF and the CPSU are of correspondingly greater significance. Unlike Spain, France is a major European power and has been a primary target of Soviet diplomatic overtures since the mid-1960s.

Moreover, the French Party is a much greater domestic political factor than the PCE. There is a real possibility that the Alliance of the Left in which it is linked to the Socialists and the small Radical Left Party may win a majority in the legislative elections scheduled for 1978. The state of relations between the CPSU and the PCF could therefore come to have a bearing on the state of relations between the French and Soviet governments.

The PCF is important to Moscow for one additional reason. Along with the PCI, it is one of the mainstays of the European Communist movement. In contrast to the PCI, the French Party has heretofore been distinguished by its orthodoxy and loyalty to Moscow. Much of Moscow's past success in its struggles to preserve its authority over the Western European Communist movement has depended on the support of the French Party. The increasing readiness the PCF has shown to align itself in opposition to the Soviets since late 1975 has correspondingly serious implications for Moscow's position vis-a-vis the main body of Western European Communism. The link the PCF has forged with the PCI, if it should endure, raises the prospect that Moscow may find itself isolated from both the Asian and Western European wings of Communism.

B. Past PCF Loyalty

With the exception of an interlude in 1968-1969, when the PCF momentarily joined other Western European Parties in opposition to the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia, the PCF historically functioned as a loyal ally of the CPSU, and frequently as its agent in maintaining discipline among the Western European Parties. It proved willing in 1971 to cut

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back its support of the PCE—whose principal patron it had been until that time—at the behest of the Soviets.³⁶ At the Brussels Conference of Western European Communist Parties in January 1974, the PCF was instrumental in excluding the anti-Soviet faction of the divided Greek Communist Party from the conference. It directly attacked the Spanish Communists on the floor of the conference—reportedly at the instigation of a CPSU official.³⁷ As for Portugal, PCF chief Marchais engaged in a bitter polemic in 1975 with the Italians and Spanish on the issue of their “interference” on behalf of the Portuguese Socialists.

The traditional guidelines for PCF behavior in the international movement were reaffirmed in early 1972 by Jean Kanapa, the PCF official with overall responsibility for foreign policy. Kanapa reportedly told an audience of PCF officials that the primary duty of the PCF was solidarity with the countries of the Soviet Bloc, and first of all with the USSR itself. Anti-Sovietism, according to Kanapa, was to be regarded as a crime.³⁸

The PCF was an equally reliable supporter of Soviet policy objectives beyond the sphere of the Communist movement. In regard to the two principal great power rivals of the USSR, Marchais has been a bitter critic of the sins of Maoism, and has been equally harsh in criticizing France's political, military, and economic links with the US and the other members of the Atlantic Alliance. Even on issues of more immediate relevance to France and the PCF, the French Party's views have generally coincided with Soviet policy positions. This has been evident in the Party's attitude toward European economic integration, where—in contrast to the PCI—it has been only a reluctant and critical participant in the institutions of the EC.

C. Significance of PCF Reversal of Course

Almost overnight, the relationship between the PCF and the CPSU has changed dramatically. The PCF's entente with the PCI in the fall of 1975 marked its shift from the role of a reliable agent of Soviet influence to a strident proponent of national autonomy.

The suddenness of the reversal was exemplified by the change in the PCF's position during the preliminary negotiations for the June summit of European Communist Parties in East Berlin. When the negotia-

tions began in late 1974 the PCF was still adhering to the pro-Soviet line. Its position changed drastically during meetings held in October and November 1975, where it suddenly emerged as a critic of the document prepared by the East Germans and the Soviets. Indeed, by the spring of 1976 it had reportedly become the most recalcitrant of all the dissident Parties in dealing with the Soviets, and its objections reportedly were the last to be overcome.³⁹

Similarly, the PCF has emerged overnight from the status of an apologist and defender of the Soviet system to a critic of Soviet violations of “human rights.” At the 22nd Congress of the PCF in February 1976, and in the presence of Soviet Politburo member A. P. Kirilenko, Marchais ventured to open his address to the Congress with an attack on the Soviets for “unjust and unjustifiable acts of repression against Soviet citizens.”⁴⁰

The same Congress witnessed a move to formally drop the French Party's commitment to the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” This hoary phrase has been symbolic of the French Party's commitment to a Soviet-style one-party dictatorship. As such, it was clearly out of phase with the PCF's efforts to sell itself



The French Communist's present aversion to association with the Soviets is a repudiation of their own recent past. In this 1972 photo, B. N. Ponomarev (far right) embraces French Communist leader Jacques Duclos at the opening of an international Communist conference in Paris. The smiling onlooker at the far left is V. V. Zagladin, now the First Deputy Chief of the International Department of the CC/CPSU.

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to the French electorate as a proponent of democratic change, and its elimination is an entirely logical step. In fact, as sudden as was the PCF's turnabout in late 1975-1976, it had its roots in the PCF's longstanding efforts to convince the French electorate of its "national" and democratic character. These efforts date back to the 1960s, and were responsible for such earlier phenomena as the PCF's criticism of the Czechoslovak invasion in 1968. What is new in the PCF's position is its determination and consistency, a change to which Moscow's persistent disregard of PCF interests has contributed heavily.

The PCF actions represent an attack on doctrines which are central to the Soviet catachism. In this, as in their open criticism of the workings of the Soviet system and in the obduracy of their newfound opposition to Soviet leadership of the international movement, the French verbally have gone beyond the Italian Party. The PCI's positions have evolved more slowly and are more consistently with their own past, and they have less need to assert their "independence" in dramatic terms. The PCF, on the other hand, must take drastic action to overcome the credibility gap which afflicts it. The commitment to democratic freedoms on which it has based its electoral platform since the formation of the Alliance of the Left in 1972 is in sharp contrast to the dictatorial structure of the Party. The contrast was demonstrated vividly in the very action by which the Party moved toward disavowing the "dictatorship of the proletariat" at its last Congress, a step which, radical as it was, was nonetheless adopted "unanimously."

D. Soviet and French Communist Interests Conflict

It is highly questionable whether anything of significance has happened to the internal character of the French Party. What has changed, however, is the PCF's determination to put its own interests ahead of those of the international movement and the CPSU. In many ways, Moscow's present difficulties with the PCF arise because of its consistent subordination of the interests of the PCF to Soviet *raison d'état*. Since the Presidency of Charles deGaulle, whose efforts to move France to a position more nearly equidistant between the two military blocs in Europe meshed with Soviet objectives, the Soviets have made the maintenance of good relations with France one of the pillars of their policy toward the West. Unfortunately for the PCF, Moscow's interest in good relations with a

conservative government in Paris has become increasingly incompatible with the advancement of Communist interests in France.

The Soviets have never hesitated in choosing between the two. During the reign of deGaulle, they issued a virtual prohibition against active and open Communist opposition to the General. The Soviets justified this prohibition on the grounds that deGaulle's foreign policies served the interests of the USSR and the working class.⁴¹ The Soviet position has remained virtually unchanged through the Pompidou administration and even into the present administration of Valery Giscard d'Estaing. It has been qualified only to the extent that the ban on Communist opposition to the French administration is to be maintained only insofar as the French administration perpetuates the foreign policy line of deGaulle.⁴² In practice, this has meant no significant change, although the Soviets have been critical of some elements of the Giscard government's foreign policy, such as its show of interest in improving relations with the US.⁴³

Soviet intervention in French Party affairs has been directed not merely at hobbling the PCF's opposition to the government, but even on occasion at actively undercutting the French Communists. This was clearly the case during the French presidential elections of 1974, when the Soviet ambassador held a well-publicized meeting with Giscard, much to the consternation of the Communists and the candidate of the Left Alliance, Francois Mitterrand of the Socialist Party. This undercut the PCF's efforts to portray Giscard as an "Atlanticist," and possibly may have tipped the balance in an election won by a razor-thin margin.

Moscow's coolness toward the electoral coalition of Communists, Socialists, and Left Radicals concluded in 1972 was evident from the very beginning. M. A. Suslov, who led the Soviet delegation to the PCF Congress in December 1972, conspicuously failed to mention this coalition in his address to the Congress.

Moscow's interest in good relations with the Giscard government helps to explain its attitude toward the Left Alliance, but the Soviets also have less Machiavellian reasons to be critical of it. Privately, they have criticized it to other European Communists on the grounds that it was based on a "weak" agreement which conceded too much to the Socialists. They have specifically warned that the French agreement is not

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to be considered a prototype for similar agreements in other Western European countries.⁴⁴ The Soviets have traditionally made their support of coalition politics conditional on the dominance of the Communist Party within the alliance, a condition which has not been met in France, where the Socialist Party has replaced the PCF as the leading representative of the French left. Moscow's unhappiness with this fact is aggravated by its distrust of Mitterrand, who in the past has been loudly critical of Soviet policies in Eastern Europe and at home.

The net effect of Soviet actions was to force the PCF to face up to the possibility that its interests did not coincide with those of the Soviet Union. The first signs of the French Party's reassessment of its relationship with Moscow appeared in the aftermath of the 1974 presidential elections. In two articles which appeared in June, the PCF newspaper, *L'Humanite*, attacked the theses advanced earlier by a Soviet scholar. *L'Humanite* asserted that "it was a grave error" to suggest as had the Soviet, that "coexistence will suffice to solve the great economic and social problems in a country like ours." The Soviet leadership, rather than the Soviet academic, was the obvious target of *L'Humanite*'s strictures, and the clear implication was that the PCF was becoming restive in the face of Moscow's inclination to subordinate French Communist interests to those of Soviet policy.

Nevertheless, the differences between the two Parties might have subsided for some time if the Zarodov article had not forced the French into open disagreement with Moscow. The initial reaction of the PCF was to dismiss the article as "unimportant" and of no relevance to the situation in France. This nonchalance could not be sustained in the face of the strong public reaction to the article in France, and widespread speculation that it presaged a Soviet move to turn the international movement back in the direction of revolution—speculation which threatened to do serious damage to the PCF's electoral appeal.

On 4 September, the PCF took direct exception to the Zarodov thesis in a front-page article in *L'Humanite*. The article specifically criticized Zarodov's dismissal of electoral democracy and disavowed his alleged attempt to reduce Communist principles "to lifeless formulae which would be applicable always and everywhere." In contrast to its behavior after previous flare-ups, the PCF this time has shown no

disposition to back down from its positions. According to numerous accounts, the PCF leadership, is now convinced that the CPSU has no interest in seeing it in power, and some leaders are prepared to contemplate a break with the CPSU.⁴⁵

E. Implications for Moscow

The fact that there is little evidence that anything of significance has changed in the PCF's internal structure is less important to the Soviets than it is to France's Western neighbors or to the French electorate. The crucial point for the Soviets where the PCF is concerned is that their authority has been challenged, not whether the challenging Party is democratic or—like the Chinese or Romanians—authoritarian in its internal organization and purposes. There is ample evidence that the Soviets take the rebellion of the PCF very seriously and are determined to oppose it. According to clandestine intelligence information, the Soviets intend to surreptitiously support the French government's efforts against the PCF in the hope that a weakened PCF will once again be forced to turn to Moscow for support. According to one report from a reliable source, the Soviets have already covertly approached the French government with an offer to supply them with information which could be used to discredit Marchais.⁴⁶

In all likelihood, the Soviets have been encouraged to act by their belief that considerable opposition to the new line of the PCF exists within the French Party. There are numerous, if generally vague, reports of dissatisfaction with the direction Marchais has given the Party, both within the leadership and the rank and file, and of nervousness on the part of Marchais and his allies.⁴⁷ Moscow was able to use the same sort of sentiment to good effect in 1968-1969 to compel the PCF to cease its criticism of Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia.

It is questionable whether Soviet actions will have the same effect this time. With the prospect of winning a legislative majority based on the Alliance of the Left a real possibility, there is a considerable incentive for PCF officials to stay with a potential winner. In the end, the success of Moscow's efforts to reverse the trend of developments within the French Party may depend on circumstances beyond its control. If the PCF should fare badly in the next elections—particularly if the Socialists should continue to profit more from their Alliance than the PCF—it is possible that Moscow's efforts may have

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some impact. If the French Communists do sufficiently well at the polls to provide a pragmatic justification for Marchais' actions, it is difficult to see that the Soviets are likely to have much success in bringing him back into line. In that case, Moscow's machinations are likely to have the effect—as they did in the PCE—of reinforcing the French Party's determination to pursue its own interests without regard for the wishes of the CPSU.

VII. PRESENT TRENDS AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE SOVIET POLICY

A. Soviets Face a Difficult Future

As Moscow looks ahead, it can be certain of little except that its relations with the Communist Parties of Western Europe are sure to become even more complex than they are presently. The impulse toward autonomy on the part of the most important of these Parties is based on hard political realities, chief among them the recognition by Western European Communist leaders that their interests are not served by close identification with the USSR. Even "loyal" Parties such as the PCP are in the process of learning painfully that a close identification with the USSR is not advantageous politically. Equally important to the future of Moscow's relationship with the Western European Parties is the mounting confidence of their leaders that defiance of the Soviet Union no longer carries with it the threat of internal schism. The significance of this feeling of self-confidence among the Western Communist leaders can be seen in the French Party's abrupt switch from docility to defiance.

Thus, Moscow is no longer in a position to assert the proposition (and to gain the acquiescence of the Western Parties for it) that what serves the interests of the USSR serves the interests of the other Parties. A further consequence is that the Soviets will be faced with increasing frequency with situations in which they must choose between their immediate diplomatic interests and their long-term goals. Yet, while Moscow may be uncomfortable with this situation, it is clearly preferable to the most likely alternative, a condition of open political strife or schism with the major Western Parties. This would subject the Soviets to attack on both their Eastern and Western ideological flanks, as well as complicating the primary political objective of

maximizing their influence in Western Europe. Moreover, the differences between the Soviets and even the most revisionist of the Western Parties should not be exaggerated. Despite the Western Parties' assertion of their autonomy, they continue to have a broad community of interests with the Soviets, particularly on questions of foreign policy. This is especially true with regard to the Third World, where the Soviets and the Western Communists come together in opposition to "neo-colonialism" and support of "natural liberation movements"—as in the Middle East, Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia. In Western Europe, they also have a common interest in reducing American political and economic influence, even though the Western Parties no longer want to see a simple substitution of Soviet power for that of the US.

The ideological bond which unites the Soviets with the Western Communists is not to be dismissed. Even the most nationally minded of the Western Communist leaders sees himself as a member of an ideological community in which the Soviets are the most senior and powerful member, and sees a corresponding gulf between himself and the most leftist of socialists. The power of this sentiment is best demonstrated, even though in a somewhat different context, by Yugoslavia's Tito, who despite a running quarrel of almost three decade's duration, has been unable to separate himself from Moscow once and for all.

B. Short-Term Problems

PCI: The contingency with which the Soviets are most likely to be faced in the next year or two is the participation of the Italian Party in government, but this would not necessarily cause them any serious problems. The PCI fully shares—for reasons of its own—Moscow's interest in avoiding a head-on political confrontation and possible political or social upheaval within Italy, and its careful pursuit of power would seem to be fully in accord with Moscow's preferences.

This says nothing about the Soviet reaction to the PCI's use of power, if and when it should acquire it. Moscow, no doubt, would react badly if the PCI, in power, should choose to remain true to its electoral commitments and preserve Italy's democratic institutions and links with the West, and if it chose to promote this line as an alternative to the Soviet system. Similarly, the Soviets would be unhappy if the

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PCI should go so far in the direction of allaying American suspicions as to produce a fundamental change in its foreign political orientation. However, the Soviets cannot be certain, any more than Western observers, of the PCI's ultimate behavior. In the interim, they seem disposed to give it the benefit of the doubt.

On the other hand, Moscow would not be unhappy if the PCI failed to gain formal entry into the government. Its doubts about the reliability of the PCI are serious enough that it might welcome an opportunity to avoid putting them to the test. However, it is hardly likely to come out in open opposition to the PCI's entry into the government, no matter how serious its suspicions. To do so would do further irreparable harm to Moscow's claim to leadership of the movement.

PCE: The Soviets are faced with a different problem in Spain. There they would like to normalize their relations with the monarchist government, but this would leave them vulnerable to charges that they had "betrayed" the still illegal PCE. The best solution, from their point of view, would be to induce the Spanish government to legalize the PCE before the establishment of diplomatic relations.

They are unlikely to do any more than the minimum in promoting the interests of the PCE, which in their eyes has been the most obnoxious of all the dissident Parties of the West. Rather they appear to be pinning all their hopes on a change in the policy line of the PCE after the departure of the aging Carillo leadership. In the meantime, the PCE is not likely to improve its position to the point where the Soviets would have to face up to the implications of having it in power. At present it is generally considered to have a relatively narrow base of support, well under 20 percent of the electorate.

PCP: The Soviets were undoubtedly disappointed when the PCP was dropped from the government in July 1976, but they appear in general to be satisfied with the PCP's present situation, in which it retains strong bases of strength in the trade union movement and in the south. Moscow's preference all along has been for a long-term strategy of building political alliances, rather than for an isolated Communist government with a precarious grip on power. This is a strategy which has now been imposed upon the PCP by the force of circumstances.

PCF: The problem they face in France is potentially the most troublesome. Not only has the French Party adopted an abrasively anti-Soviet line, but—in contrast to the Italian situation—the Soviets see it as being in danger of domination by the much larger Socialist Party. Most serious of all, the PCF has begun to push the Soviets to choose openly between their commitment to good relations with the existing government and their commitment to the prosperity of French Communism. This has the potential of becoming a serious embarrassment for the Soviet leadership.

This latter circumstance probably helps explain the contrast between the Soviet efforts to undermine the leadership of the PCF and their tolerance of Berlinguer, who has made no such demands for the PCI. If the CPSU's campaign against Marchais should fail, as it well might, the Soviets again would face the inescapable necessity of choosing openly between state interest and ideological commitment. Whatever they choose to do, it will be costly for them.

C. Long-Term Prospects

Despite the difficulties they face, there is no sign that the Soviet leaders have altered their conviction that their long-term interests are tied to the expansion of Communism in Europe. The best evidence of that is their continuing commitment to keeping the international movement in being, and their continuing *sub-rosa* support of even those Parties with which they have the most difficulties.

This is not to say that the Soviet judgment is correct. In particular, the postwar history of the Communist world suggests that the Soviet leaders' view of their ability to manage the Western Communists is overly optimistic, and based more on ideological assumptions than on rational calculation. Only in Bulgaria, where unique ethnic, historical, and cultural links exist, have the Soviets been able to maintain their authority over a "fraternal" government in the absence of a military occupation force. Once in power, if this were to happen, the Italian, French, Spanish, or Portuguese Communists would be likely to allow national and particularistic interests to dominate in their relations with the USSR, thus following in the path already taken by the Chinese, Yugoslavs, Romanians, and others.

Even without participation in government, the process is already well advanced, and is showing signs

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of a dramatic acceleration, as witness the Spanish Communist leaders' public dismissal of "proletarian internationalism" as a concept which has outlived its time; the French Communists' move to renounce the "dictatorship of the proletariat" as the stated objective of the Party; and the PCI's restatement of its commitment to a multi-Party system and rejection of the Soviet system as totally inapplicable to Italy.

There is a real prospect that within the next few years the Communist movement will experience another historic split, and one of potentially even greater moment for the Soviet Union than the break with China. The schism with China crippled Moscow's influence over the Asian wing of the Communist movement and plunged it into a confrontation with another great power rival, but posed no ideological threat within Eastern Europe and the USSR itself where Maoism has had almost no appeal, even to dissidents.

The Soviet Bloc is not likely to be equally impervious to the attractions of a less rigid and easier-going Western European variant of Communism akin to democratic socialism. The most serious threat to Soviet and Eastern European orthodoxy has always come from the right, from the direction of liberal "reformism." If one or more of the "revisionist" Parties wins power in the next year or two, or more likely, a share of power in a coalition government, such a development would inevitably lend a new legitimacy to the "revisionist" doctrines they espouse. In fact, some Soviet dissidents—the historian Roy Medvedyev, for example—have already taken to citing Western European Communist doctrines to justify the democratic reforms they advocate for the Soviet system.

The financial and organizational instruments at Moscow's disposal are probably adequate to hold most or all of the lesser Parties in line for the next few years, but it is unlikely that Soviet threats or pressure will be enough to compel the larger Parties to reverse their present course. The Spanish and Italians have already proven their ability to withstand Soviet pressure, and Marchais presumably would not have launched the PCF on its new course if he had not had considerable confidence in his ability to withstand Soviet pressure. If pressure tactics are employed, their most likely effect is to further embitter relations between the Soviets and the dissident Parties.

Another option for Moscow is to formally anathematize the Italians, French, and Spanish leaders and to attempt to split their Parties. It is probably entirely within its power to precipitate a breakaway by one or more pro-Soviet leaders, but it is unclear what significance this would have in real political terms. Even if a pro-Soviet breakaway group should carry an appreciable share of a Party's membership with it, this would not be of major significance unless it proved capable of challenging the "revisionists" at the polls.

The temptation for Moscow to launch an open assault on one or more of the dissident Parties must also be tempered by the knowledge that it can no longer effectively quarantine a dissident Party. As long as the entente which has developed between the Spanish, Italians, and French endures, this possibility will be effectively foreclosed.

In view of the inadequacy of the weapons at their disposal, the Soviets are likely to have great difficulty in mustering the resolve necessary to undertake forceful action against the Western dissidents. Moreover, the assumption that rising Communist influence in the West helps to tip the East-West balance in Moscow's favor will continue to induce ambivalence in Moscow.

Still the Soviets must at some point retaliate against direct attacks, however inadequate the means at their disposal. There seems at the moment a fair chance that this point will be reached within the next few years, given the electoral advantage Western Communist leaders see in challenging the CPSU. Unless the PCI should suffer serious reversals in the next year or so, or the PCF lose ground in the 1978 elections, the outlook is for a continued deterioration of Moscow's relationship with these important Parties.

Any of a number of quite possible developments could serve to accelerate the deterioration in Moscow's relations with the Western Parties. One such possibility would be a situation in which the Soviets were forced to use force to maintain their position in Eastern Europe. This would inevitably force the Western European Communists into denunciations of Soviet actions, and an intensification in the bitterness of Moscow's polemics with the Western Parties would be entirely predictable. Soviet meddling in Yugoslav affairs after the passing of Tito would have the same result. Similarly, if any of the Western Parties should identify itself with "anti-Soviet" positions as a

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participant in government, this would force a Soviet reaction, as would any fundamental alteration of the basically hostile relations between the Western Parties and Washington.

Moscow's response to provocation will be all the more extreme if it perceives its direct interests to be threatened. This clearly would be the case if the Soviets believed that the virus of "revisionism" had taken hold in one or more of the East European Parties or the CPSU, or it should finally perceive the actions of Western European Communists as unqualifiedly detrimental to Soviet interests.

Under such circumstances, the Soviets would be likely to couple an offensive against Western "revisionism" with pressure for an ideological crackdown in Eastern Europe. Such a campaign could spill over to effect East-West relations in general if—as is quite possible—Moscow were to revert to a state of Cold War defensiveness and move to restrict East-West exchanges in order to block the spread of the infection. Neither logic nor Soviet history provides any grounds to doubt that the political survival instinct of the Soviet leaders would take precedence over any particular policy interest, including Brezhnev's cherished "Peace Program."

Several developments which could have a crucial impact on the changing relationship between the Soviets and the Western European Parties are almost certain to take place within the next two to five years. The ability of the major Parties to convert their stance of "moderation" and "independence" into political gains will be tested in the immediate future, in France by the 1978 legislative elections, and in Italy by the

ability or inability of the PCI over the next year or two to continue expanding its political influence in the face of a weak and demoralized opposition. If either Party should seriously stumble, this would provide ammunition for the Soviets and the more orthodox Leninists within their own ranks, and possibly cause the Italians and French to retreat from their present positions. Continued gains, on the other hand, are likely to confirm them in their present course and strengthen the positions of the leaders who have brought them there.

Crucial events beyond the borders of Western Europe will also take place during this period. Tito's days are clearly numbered, and we have already made reference to the strains which Soviet interference in Yugoslavia would impose on Moscow's relations with the PCI and other Western Parties. Finally, changes which will affect relations within the Communist movement are almost certain to occur in Moscow itself. Most, if not all of the men at the top of the Soviet hierarchy, who range in age from 69 to 74, are likely to be gone. The arrival of a new generation of Soviet leaders will inevitably impart new nuances and tactical shifts to the direction of Soviet policy, even though its main lines may be undisturbed. Any changes which new leaders undertake, even if not far-reaching, could prove to be unsettling to Moscow's relations with the Western Parties. Moreover, a new Soviet leadership, at least in its initial period in power, will enjoy even less claim to leadership within the international movement than the Brezhnev leadership, thus opening the way to further self-assertiveness on the part of the Western Parties.

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ANNEX

THE CPSU: INTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Divided Soviet Counsels

The preceding sections have treated Soviet policy as if it were the product of a unitary actor. This, of course, is not the case. Soviet policy is the product of many individuals and many institutions, which among them represent a considerable spectrum of opinions and interests. This spectrum is clearly much narrower than it is in more pluralistic states, but it is nonetheless real. Policy is the final product of a complex bureaucratic process in which competing interests are balanced, melded, and occasionally overridden.

The ambivalence and occasional contradictions which have often characterized Soviet policy in the areas here discussed are in themselves a proof that Soviet counsels are divided as often as not. On occasion Soviet officials have been in open disarray, as in the aftermath of Zarodov's *Pravda* article. Some Soviet spokesmen tried to dismiss the article as a mistake. One Soviet official in West Germany went so far as to say that he and "other senior Soviet officials" disavowed the article.⁴⁸

B. Points of Disagreement

There is some evidence concerning the participants in the leadership debate and the views they represent. On 17 March, shortly after the 25th Party Congress, the senior Party ideologue, Politburo member M. A. Suslov, publicly condemned so-called "national" and "regional" forms of Communism as tendencies directly harmful to the cause of the working class. Suslov's remarks were clearly directed at the Italian, Spanish and French Parties—and were a clear escalation of the more nuanced views expressed by Brezhnev at the Party Congress.

The contentious nature of Suslov's belligerent remarks was demonstrated the next day when *Pravda* deleted them from its summary of his speech. The implication that Suslov's remarks had gone beyond the Politburo consensus, and presumably beyond the

limits favored by Brezhnev, received some indirect confirmation on 22 April, when KGB chief Andropov spoke for the Politburo on the occasion of the anniversary of Lenin's birth. Andropov, a reputed Politburo "moderate" despite his security responsibilities, asserted that "sectarianism" was as great a danger to Communism as "reformism." Andropov's equation of the sin of the overly ardent revolutionaries with that of the overly cautious practitioners of political maneuver seemed calculated to right the balance upset by Suslov.

Some accounts of a meeting between Berlinguer and Soviet leaders Brezhnev, Suslov, and Ponomarev during the Party Congress indicate that differences between the Soviet hierarchs were openly exposed to the Italians. According to these accounts, the Italians found Brezhnev much more sympathetic to the tactical exigencies of their situation than his associates.⁴⁹ The quarrel would appear to be between those who, like Brezhnev, are prepared to minimize doctrinal differences for the sake of political advantage, and those who, like Suslov, are opposed to any doctrinal backsliding.

It is nonetheless much easier to identify the issues than the participants in this internal debate. The issues emerge in the media and in the comments of Soviet officials, albeit often only incompletely and in disguised form. The key participants—those officials who occupy policymaking positions—almost never express their personal views for the public record.

The main issues involved are clear. The fundamental point of doctrinal differences is the question of whether the West—as some Soviet propagandists have proclaimed—is experiencing a "decisive crisis" as a result of the combined impact of political, social, and economic difficulties.

If capitalism is indeed in crisis, the West has moved from a pre-revolutionary to a revolutionary stage. This in turn would necessitate a turn from the conciliatory

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policies appropriate to a pre-revolutionary phase to the determined bid for power appropriate to a revolutionary phase of development. The answer to this question would also dictate the attitude to be taken toward political or social upheaval in the West. If the West is in a revolutionary phase, upheaval must be regarded in a positive light; if not, in a negative light.

Sharply divergent positions have been staked out on these and related questions in the Soviet press and journals. Zarodov's militant article was striking for the prominence lent it by its publication in *Pravda* and by Brezhnev's tacit endorsement. Ideas similar to those expressed, by Zarodov have maintained their grip on a sizeable portion of the Soviet *apparat*, that faction labelled as "neo-Stalinist" by its opponents. The opposing viewpoint also has been expressed.*

Zarodov disposes of the question of assessing the present state of capitalism with the assertion that Lenin had described the present age as a "revolutionary" era. Consequently, there is no question of limiting the goals of the revolutionary party to those appropriate to a preliminary historical phase. Limited "reformist" goals have meaning only insofar as they serve as a "prologue to socialist revolution;" there can be "no 'wall' between the democratic and socialist stages of revolution in the (revolutionary) era;" and socialist revolution is only possible under the hegemony of the "party of the proletariat."

Articles by A. A. Galkin (in *Questions of Philosophy* in September 1974) and T. T. Timofeyev (in *Questions of Philosophy* in May 1975 and in *Working Class* in the September-October 1975 issue) and an unsigned editorial article in the August 1975 issue of *Questions of Philosophy* have put forward a sharply distinct position. Where the doctrinaire Zarodov and company insist that the doctrinal purity of the Communist Party must take precedence over the formation and preservation of political alliances, the "moderates" argue that the formation and expansion of broadly based "socio-political" alliances is the most pressing need of the present time. Where the doctrinaire ideologues emphasize the need to push from the "democratic" to the Socialist stage of the revolutionary process without undue delay, the moderates insist that those who belittle the impor-

*Most consistently by the Chief of the Institute of the World Workers' Movement, T. T. Timofeyev, and his subordinate, A. A. Galkin.

tance of a definite and prolonged stage of the "general democratic" struggle are guilty of "adventurism" and "left-opportunism."

It is possible to treat these differences as mere matters of nuance. The "moderates" do not deny the necessity of eventually moving from the "democratic" phase to the phase of socialist revolution, nor do the doctrinaires reject the need for broad political alliances in the initial stages of the revolutionary process.

It is in the differing attitudes concerning the significance of the various political, economic, and sociological difficulties said to comprise the "crisis of capitalism" that fundamental philosophical differences between the two groups can be found. It is not simply that the moderates dispute the notion that the West is on the brink of revolutionary upheaval. Not even Zarodov made that assertion. It is that the moderates challenge the assumption that the collapse of bourgeois-democratic institutions in the advanced capitalist countries would redound to the benefit of Communism. They cite the lessons of Hitler and Mussolini to argue that the most likely beneficiary of a severe crisis in the West would be the extreme right. According to Galkin, "The greater the instability of the situation (in the West) . . . the greater the 'social yearning' for a strong hand able to restore order." Furthermore, he argued that under certain circumstances, "similar sentiments could capture a part of the working class."

Timofeyev has made the same case. In his article in the May issue of *Questions of Philosophy* he pointedly reaffirmed the relevance of a key thesis of the Seventh Comintern Congress. "The workers in a number of capitalist countries 'must choose specifically today not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between a bourgeois democracy and fascism.'

The most far-ranging development of the theme that conditions in the West are *not* propitious for Communist advances was made in an unsigned editorial which appeared in the August issue of *Questions of Philosophy*. This not only endorsed the view that fascism rather than Communism would emerge the victor from any period of major social upheaval in the West, but concluded that the most effective obstacle to the triumph of fascism was the ruling bourgeoisie, which was "vitally interested" in

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protecting the "democratic forms" it had created. In contrast, the working class was markedly susceptible to the "social demogogy" of fascism.

The joint interests of all "progressives" demand a united front against the common enemy—"the left extremist, pseudo-revolutionary and fascist groups that are often joined both on the level of theoretical and propagandistic formulations and in practical actions." Moreover, the editorial concluded that the conditions which applied within the developed countries of the West also applied to the world as a whole: "The solution of these . . . require the cooperation of heterogeneous socio-economic forces on a world-wide scale and assumes their acceptance of a specific system of mutual obligations."

The contrast to the views put forward by doctrinaires of the Zarodov stripe clearly is both real and substantive, and is indicative of the differences which exist among Soviet officialdom. The fact that the *Questions of Philosophy* editorial was released for publication on 6 August, the very day that Zarodov's article appeared in *Pravda*, is also illustrative of those differences.

It is also clear that the doctrinaires have had the better part of this intramural struggle in recent months. Whereas Zarodov has been received by Brezhnev, the editorial board of *Problems of Philosophy* has been the subject of frequent critical scrutiny by Party officials. The same August issue which

contained the article quoted above also featured the transcript of one such critical review of the journal's performance.

Nevertheless, it does not seem that the struggle has been resolved in favor of rigid orthodoxy. Signs of a tilt in the direction of dogmatism have not been accompanied by any evidence of concrete Soviet support for a shift to a more revolutionary posture on the part of the Western Parties. Despite Brezhnev's reception of Zarodov, his behavior at the CECP was markedly conciliatory. To the contrary, Soviet policy—as distinct from doctrine—still inclines in the direction of relative moderation.

Moreover, Soviet spokesmen with a more direct involvement in policy have continued to show restraint in their public utterances. Thus, V. V. Zagladin, the Deputy Chief of the International Department of the CC/CPSU, sounded a rather subdued note in two recent articles (in the September-October 1975 issue of *Working Class* and the November issue of *Questions of Philosophy*). Zagladin indicated that the "crisis of capitalism" was to be regarded as a prolonged illness rather than a token of imminent collapse. The immediate task was the removal of the "objective and subjective difficulties in the path of the *formation of the preconditions* for socialist revolution" (emphasis added). Brezhnev himself endorsed this position in his report to the 25th Congress, noting that Communists did not expect the "imminent collapse" of capitalism.

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⁷ According to FBIS analysts, a *Pravda* editorial article on 21 February was the "first authoritative discussion" of events in Portugal. See the 26 February 1975 article in the FBIS publication, *Trends in Communist Propaganda*.

⁸ *Izvestia*, 15 Jul 1975.

⁹ *Pravda*, 24 Jul 1975.

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¹¹ President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, hardly an influential figure in Portugal, reported receiving a personal letter from Brezhnev in which he was asked to intercede with the PSP to stabilize the situation in Portugal. Embassy Dar Es-Salaam 4218, 10 Sep 1975, CONFIDENTIAL.

¹² See the TASS release of 9 August and *Pravda* of 10 August 1975.

¹³ The Soviet public response to the legislative elections of April 1976 followed this line. See *Pravda* of 29 April 1976.

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²¹ TDCTS-314/02679-73, 30 Mar 1973, SECRET/NOFORN.

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³¹ CS-311/01810-71, 9 Mar 1971, SECRET/NOFORN.

³² *Party Life* (Partinaya Zhizn') Feb 1974.

³³ TDFIRDB-315/11498-74, 19 Nov 1974, SECRET/NOFORN/NOCON. According to this report, a PCOE official was denied entry to the USSR in late 1974, but "warmly received" in East Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

³⁴ *Time*, Jul 28, 1975.

³⁵ TDFIR-314/01717-75, 21 Mar 1975, SECRET/NOFORN.

³⁶ CS-311/07854-71, 8 Nov 1971, SECRET/NOFORN.

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⁴⁰ *New York Times*, 4 Feb 1976.

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⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ The Soviets showed their displeasure with Giscard by publishing markedly hostile articles in the central press during his October 1975 visit to Moscow. See *Pravda* articles of 15, 16, 25 October.

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